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THE ADVENTURES

OF

DOCTOR BRADY.

VOL. II.

THE ADVENTURES

OF

DOCTOR BRADY.

BY

WILLIAM HOWARD RUSSELL,

AUTHOR OF

"LETTERS FROM THE CRIMEA," "MY DIARY IN INDIA,"

"MY DIARY NORTH AND SOUTH," ETC. ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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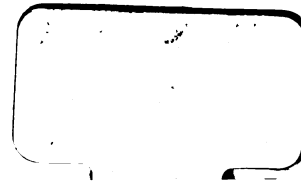
CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

	PAGE
I. HOW I BEGIN TO FIND I AM MISTAKEN	1
II. TWO ESSAYS TO BEGIN LIFE	21
III. HOW I BECAME DR. BRADY	40
IV. LIFE IN COLLEGE	63
V. A VISITOR AND A MYSTERY	79
VI. THE COLONEL'S REVELATIONS	90
VII. AN ORGIE AND ITS ENDING	102
VIII. A NIGHT'S WORK	114
IX. THE DUEL	125
X. THE OUTLAW	146
XI. THE "DOCTOR'S" DEBUT	165
XII. COUNTRY QUARTERS	179
XIII. THE RANEE OF AURIPORE	190
XIV. WELCOME TO KILMOYLE	210
XV. THE CASTLE DINNER	232
XVI. THE FACE AT THE WINDOW	270
XVII. THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM	281


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VOL. II.

"Oh no, Mr. Standish, indeed you are not! Pray go on." I was listening, indeed, with the greatest interest, for here I was face to face with a man who had something to tell by which I might shape my course.

"Well, I was pretty well up in classics, mathematics, and that sort of thing. I got a situation as a tutor in a family. You stare? It was pleasant enough; but, unfortunately, one fine day little Miss——Well, there's no use in mentioning names—came home from her finishing-school: a sentimental, foolish young person, with soft eyes, and long ringlets, and a silly smile. 'Gad! how that girl persecuted me with her blushes! And her drooping eyelids! And her sighs! And her little ambuscades—running out of one room or the other as I was on the landing or on the stairs! To make my story short, I had to leave a comfortable sort of house and nice people, for the little goose wanted to run away with me—Just imagine, she sixteen and I a year older!—vowed she would die if I didn't. But she's married and has two children now. She cut me dead at the opera the other night as I was unconsciously staring up from the pit into her box. Well, I got a place in a school——"

"As a master, Mr. Standish?"

"Yes, to be sure——"

I thought of Mr. Cuffe, poor Mons. Le Bœuf, Snell, and all the other helpless sufferers who were bullied, plotted against, and evil entreated day and night by the crafty little conspirators, on whom they took mean vengeance when fortune favoured them.

"Wasn't it a miserable life, sir?"

"It was not quite the most enjoyable existence in the world, but I made up my mind to do my duty, with God's help. I resolved from the very first to go to the bar, for I had an instinct which told me there were the makings of a lawyer here (he touched his bold open brow with his finger). Hang me if the head-master's daughter didn't take to worry me! She used to bother me with bouquets and idiotic verses; and Mrs. Syntax aided and abetted her. Among my father's devices for playing the deuce with himself was the famous one of establishing a claim to a dormant title—an Irish peerage, Standish of Turvey. My grandfather used to get furious at the notion. 'An' if ye geet it, what the de'il wad ye do wi' it? To be a peer without ony policies is bad enoo'; but to be an Airish laird without a saxpence! The

man's a dreevelin' lunatick!' I had a whole lot of papers of my father's, and old law books with the Turvey coronet on them, and Lord knows what else which he had inherited. So Missie got it into her head that I was a young lord in disguise, dying for love of her, though too modest to avow it. I was fairly obliged to fly again. It's too ridiculous, isn't it? You think I'm a vain fellow telling you all this! Eh? Well, then, I came to London; I gave lessons in everything I knew, and took lessons in shorthand and all sorts of things I thought would be of use to me. I toiled night and day—I wrote in magazines—till I scraped up money enough to enter my name at the Temple. I shall be called this year please God, and I have an engagement as reporter on *The Hercules*, which gives me bread and butter, and enables me to dispense with 'grinding' or tutoring. All this time I was helping the poor old women. They are living in a small village in France for economy sake; and they send me over wonderful nightcaps and slippers and smoking-caps, which I have to pay tremendous freights upon, so that I could fit out a college. There's my case. There is only one drawback to it. I am horribly in love; and my folly will culminate in the gigantic delicious mis-

take I am going to make, as soon as I am called, of marrying the sweetest, loveliest girl who never had a penny. But I do not despair even then. Well, what do you think of that?"

There was a frankness about the young man which was irresistible. I was about to open my lips and my heart to him, when the mysterious person styled "Mrs. Chandler," who looked like a bundle of old clothes on a crooked stick covered by a bonnet, announced "Dr. Chick." A shabby young man, with a very strong smell of tobacco radiating from him even through the fumes of Standish's pipe, presented himself, and listened to the explanation of my case with immense gravity. Dr. Chick first examined my hand and my knee, and dressed the cuts and abrasions which were healing fast. Then he put his hands on his knees, and looking intently into my face, inquired, "And what are you going to ask? What's your figure?"

"I don't understand you, sir."

"What do you expect? I can prove a good deal of injury if your governor is obliged to go into court. If I was you, I wouldn't stir out till it came to trial. I could swear you kept your room. And who knows — with proper treatment there

might be erysipelas! Oh dear me, such damages as you may have! Quite a lucky young fellow, 'pon my word! Ah! I never light on such chances, though I go in excursion trains at Easter and Whitsun, to the seaside and back, and take six hours of the briny, for half-a-crown, as if the most of them that go hadn't more appetite than they knew what to do with."

Dr. Chick took his departure after a whispered interview with my host.

"Well," quoth Standish, with his pipe still in full power—"well? And so you were going to tell me——"

I told him all I could bear to tell; my grandfather's death, poverty at home, my troubles and contentions at school and at college, my longing to see the world and retrieve our fortunes.

"And suppose, now, we find out Sir Richard Desmond for you, what will you get him to do?" he asked, rather severely, when I had finished my story. "You have run off from your college because you couldn't stand a little chaff, and you have evaded a man who was kind to you in order to seek out one who doesn't care for you. Besides, instead of being so discontented, you ought to be one of the happiest fellows in the world. You

have friends; you have enough to prevent your starving; you need not depend on any one—at least you can get a profession—do anything you please—And you go and sell your clothes and run off from college and distress that worthy Mr. Bates! He will be hunting you all over London; no doubt he came up by the next train, and will go to Sir Richard Desmond's if Maws has not given him my address."

"You do not understand me, Mr. Standish. It is because Mr. Bates is so kind I do not like troubling him. Sir Richard will not be at all put out by anything I do. Still, you are right; I ought not to do anything to distress Mr. Bates. I will not either."

Standish took down a "Court Guide."

"'Desmond, Æneas, Colonel, Clarges-street, 10, Oriental Club.' Indian, I suppose. 'Desmond, John, Jermyn-street; Desmond, Ralph, Albany, White's; Desmond, Sir Richard, Bart.; Miss Desmond, 207, Grosvenor-street.' There he is. I never knew there were so many Desmonds in London; no one ever knows till one looks. We can call there. And we can send to Langley Station. And you must write there as well as to Dublin. I think you should send a few

lines to old Moody at Sweatenham, whom you admit to have been a just sort of fellow. Ay, and I would make it up by a letter to all the fellows you've quarrelled with, whom you don't think ill of. Write before we go out, and meantime I'll just see if I can't rig you out a little decently, for it wont do for you to make your bow to London society in that costume."

He went out with a pleasant smile. I sat down and tried to write, but my thoughts wandered far away. Standish told me I ought to be happy! He did not know—how could he?—what my heart yearned for. Far away in that little French village there were fond souls, who loved him tenderly, and whose prayers were for ever shielding him. Who cared for me? Mr. Bates was not of my kith and kin. He was very kind, but I could not love him. No! Beyond the seas in that distant land——

Standish was back with a great bale borne by a porter.

"Here is all the outfitter's people could think of. Are your letters ready? We can finish them afterwards. Now let us try on your toggery. Shirts! We'll take half a dozen of them. That jacket is marvellous. Bravo! They must have been made for you—hat, boots, and all. We'll get the old

things done up. And now we'll go forth in all our glory and astonish London."

London rather astonished me. If a straw as it is whirled along in a mill-race could reflect on its situation it probably would not feel much concern. Why should it? What matter where it is going, at what speed, or with what companions? What could it ever hope to be, mill-wheel or not, but a straw? But man philosophizes about himself and his fellows as they are swept down in the flood. He wonders where all these people come from, and where and how they live, and where they are going in such a hurry, as he is borne in the struggling mass, which is such a subject of curiosity to each of its infinite atoms.

"Sir Richard Desmond is not in London," said the porter. "We expect him back to-morrow night, but Miss Desmond is in and her niece."

"Has a gentleman named Bates been calling here lately, may I ask?"

"Bates?—Mr. Bates, of Dublin? Yes, here is a card he left early this morning." (He took one from a card-plate and read, "Mr. Bates, 23, Dominick Street.") "He's stopping at Fenton's. He saw the ladies and went away in a great hurry —is inquiring after a youngster who ran away from

school—Master Brady—a ward of Sir Richard's. Perhaps you know something of him?"

I felt my cheeks reddening. All the time I was wondering, "What will Mary Butler say when she hears I have run off from school?" I would have given anything to have had a chance of telling her my own tale.

"If Mr. Bates calls again, pray show him this card. Now we'll go to Fenton's."

Mr. Bates had breakfasted, "gone out early." He had not been in since, and had left no message, except that he was going away that evening. We drove off to the Temple. Inside the letter-box was a card of Mr. Bates's, and below his address there was a pencilled inquiry, "Have you seen Mr. Brady?"

I was led about in a reverie from place to place by Standish, who sent off notes and left messages indefatigably, but my guardian was not to be found. Standish proposed to take me to an early dinner at a literary club of which he was a member, called "The Addison," and despatched a messenger to Fenton's with an invitation for Mr. Bates.

"You will meet some strange fellows I dare say. But Mr. Bates, if he be the man I take him,

would like the chance of meeting men most of whom have more brains than money."

The club met in a long, narrow, ill-lighted room, up a corkscrew staircase; the walls were covered with panels, each of which belonged to a member, who followed his taste and fancy in the subject and decorations. Some were filled by screens covered with scraps; others contained portraits or landscapes; others coats of arms and bits of *diablerie*, well or ill drawn and coloured. Amongst these panels one riveted my eye—it was a light sketchy oil painting of a woman in a gorgeous Oriental dress, seated in a divan, with a long pipe in her mouth, lazily puffing out a little nebula of smoke, and surrounded by fruits in vases, and piles of shawls, and gold and silver vessels.

"Do you think it good?" asked Standish. "That's Joliffe's panel. He's a Yankee painter—a very good fellow; but he pulls the bow like a Parthian."

"It is very like some one I know—that is," I stammered, "a picture of some one I have seen. Pray ask who it is."

"Joliffe, my young friend wants to know who your Eastern beauty is. He is much struck by a resemblance to some one he fancies he

knows. It has just been put up, I was telling him."

"Ah! she was something like, I can tell you, my Mahometan Princess. That is only a copy of my picture made for a great Indian friend of mine, for which he gave me a lakh of rupees. It's like, though it has not the fire of the original. Poor Mohtee!"

"Is the lady dead, then, sir?"

"Not that I know of. But the Nawab was an awful jealous wretch, and he'd just as soon have chopped her up as look at her. Led her a horrid life at times, though she really governed the place for him."

"And who was she, may I ask?"

"A Circassian, I think. But there's no saying. After the Nawab saw her smiling at me, I only was let take peeps just to complete my sketch for the picture."

"And where did you see her, sir, and how long ago?"

"Why, in the Nawab's palace, at Pergunnahpore, to be sure, last year—no; it's two years ago now nearly."

"You are absolutely eating nothing!" said Standish, as we sat at dinner. "You've lost your

heart to that great fat singing girl, whom Joliffe gave a few rupees to for a sitting, and has dressed up with all those splendours out of the resources of his imagination."

I suppose there were witty men at table, certainly there was much laughter; but I was busy staring and wondering at the likeness in the panel in the corner of the room, though there seemed to glare out from it a mocking, cruel, stony glance, in answer to my eager gaze. One member of the club—a small weak man, whose head was so set on his rounded shoulders that it was, as it were, thrust out at you, at times fascinated me by the glitter of his eye and his weird features. It was a singular face; the thick hair, pushed back from the forehead, fell in a manelike shock behind his ears; his eyebrows, shaggy and full, were set over the eyes as clouds overlie the lightning, and when he spoke they were lifted somewhat, and the eyelid rose; then the features gleamed on you, filled with a kind of radiance; the pupils were literally charged with fire; the thin, curved, flexible lips opened; the shaft, quick and dazzling as the electric flash itself, was launched—the thunder followed, and the face slept again.

A waiter brought in a letter for Standish,

who opened it, and handed me a note from Mr. Bates.

"Fenton's, 7 P.M.

"MY DEAR TERENCE,—I must leave town to see Sir Richard Desmond at once, on urgent business. I enclose you some money till I return in a day or two, when we will decide what is best to be done, as you don't like Sweatenham. Why didn't you tell me? I am very glad you escaped, and acted so well in that dreadful smash. Mr. Standish will, perhaps, be kind enough to get you lodgings, and I have ordered clothes, &c., to be sent to you. Should you need anything, go to Messrs. Protheroe and Clark, of 15, Bedford Place, and ask to see Mr. Clark, who knows all about you. Not a moment to spare. I have been after you all day, and am overwhelmed in business; but I must say I do not think you acted well in leaving college without a warning word beforehand to

"Your affectionate guardian,

"J. BATES."

"And so I'm to take care of you?" said Standish. "Mr. Bates is good enough to say Mr. Maws spoke of me in the highest terms. It looks

like briefs to come in the Great North and South Junction Company. Let me see. What do you say if we go to the opera? It must be the gallery, though, for you have no dress clothes."

I was glad to escape from the Evil Eye. There was a great press of vehicles as we passed out of a narrow street, and our cab grated alongside a carriage in which sat an old lady with a peevish face, overlapping a companion in her swelling drapery.

"Mind where you are driving to, cabman," shouted the coachman.

"Mind yerself, cauliflower-wig, and keep your own side," roared the cabman.

There was a slight collision, our cab cannoned off the massive wheel of the family coach, and as the old lady turned I perceived it was Miss Desmond, in greater state than usual, and that she had been eclipsing none other than Mary Butler. The coachman whipped his horses, and in another moment pulled ahead into a line of carriages, whilst our driver was brought to and engaged in a brisk dialogue with a number-taking policeman.

"What a beautiful face!" exclaimed Standish. "Did you see her?"

"Yes, indeed I did. I know her, too. That was Miss Butler, Sir Richard Desmond's niece."

"She is exquisite. How calm she was, keeping that old parrot beside her, who was chattering and fluttering all her feathers, in order. They are going to the opera, I suppose."

We mounted up and up, and at length came to a region high above the amber glories of the boxes, fresh in their new silks and satins, just as the curtain was opening on the first scene of the opera of a new composer—one Giuseppe Verdi. Far down below me, after my eyes had become accustomed to the glare, I saw Mary Butler seated, half concealed by the curtains of her box, with her eyes fixed on the stage.

You may imagine what were the sensations of a raw Irish lad who is taken to the opera for the first time. I was in a trance, in which the senses were lapt in thrilling pleasure, unbroken save by the hateful fall of the curtain and the buzz of the people talking between the acts, and in some mysterious way Mary Butler was mingled with my delight. What would I have cared for the opera had she not been there? Suddenly she had vanished—the box was empty.

"I saw the parrot peck at her and carry her off

just now," observed Standish. "I could almost hear her sigh through my glass as she turned from the stage. The parrot was in great agitation, and your fair friend's colour changed as she spoke to her. She left her bouquet behind her. They went off in the deuce of a hurry."

I was glad when it was over. We were in a whirlpool of people at the foot of the box-staircase — flowing drapery, diamonds, pearls, white cravats, black coats. A knot of men were conversing together in the midst of the crowd.

"What do you think of the opera, Mr. Skewer?" asked Standish of one of them.

"Opera!—call that an opera? Did you ever hear such screech-owl noises in your life?"

"Ruin any singer in the world; no voice could stand it," screamed Mr. Kettle.

"A mere trick of melody here and there—no music in it," growled Mr. Rizzio. "Choruses all in unison."

"And so *that's* damned," quoth Mr. Standish, as we got out into the arcade. "These men are the great critics on whose fiat the doom of composers depends—for the time, at all events."

"I thought it very beautiful. What have you got there, Mr. Standish?"

"But you mustn't think so. It can't be anything if Skewer, Kettle, Rizzio, and the rest say it's not. That?—oh, that's the bouquet the young lady left. I tipped a fellow to get it for me. Here it is, if you like it. And now we'll get some supper and go home to the Temple."

I was almost afraid he was going back to "The Addison." I dreaded those staring eyes; but Standish selected a quiet tavern, and as I crept upstairs after him to our elevated residence I took the opportunity of giving two or three kisses to the paper and leaves and flowers of the bouquet, which were only seen by the feeble gaslight on the landing.

CHAPTER II.

TWO ESSAYS TO BEGIN LIFE.

EARLY next day I was at Grosvenor Street. The footman did not know exactly what had occurred; but there was bad news from Sir Richard abroad. He had met with an accident, or something of the kind. Miss Desmond and Miss Butler had started by the first train for the Continent.

Standish was out when the cab deposited me in Temple-lane. He had left a note to say he would return in the evening, and that meantime he had told Wilkins, the Head-Porter, whom I was to inquire for, to have a trusty man to go about with me and see the sights.

I did not care for sights. It is wonderful how young people are bored to death about sights by persons who ought to know better. It is only when one has got accustomed to the greatest sight of all

—the world itself, and the creatures in it—he begins to bestow a thought on the details. Still I went about as I was told, at the tail of the crowds led by gabbling vergers. I felt how the most sacred shrines could be rendered common-place—how "The Abbey" would cease to command veneration, and St. Paul's be turned into a showman's booth. Three days passed in London, and I saw all my sights.

I sat in one of my old musings. It was evident Mr. Bates did not know what to do with me, and yet he was my best friend. Maurice Prendergast was a friend, perhaps, but he knew nothing of the world. Major Turnbull?—I could not tell where he was to be found. Jack Window? I had searched for him in vain in the "Court Directory." Would it not be a good thing to decide before Mr. Bates returned? I seized my hat and flew down stairs in an instant.

When I swung about in the current of Fleet-street, all the plans I had revolved in the Temple were resolved into one.

"I want you to drive me to where they recruit for the army, cabman!"

The man looked at me.

"You don't want it for yourself, is it? A young

gen'elman like you must have done something before he'd go for a sojer."

The cabman stopped at the corner of a narrow street, not far from which rose the towers of Westminster. There were men dressed in different uniforms, with canes in their hands, cockades and streamers in their shakoes—sharp-eyed, eager-looking fellows, with stripes on their arms, and ribands and medals on their breasts, loitering about the pavement at this corner.

I had seen the recruiting party at Kilmoyle, when they took off young Dempsey, and Mat our pantry boy, and I knew well who the men with the gay ribands were.

"Here's a job for you, sergeant!" said the cabman to the nearest; "I brought him, and I hope you'll remember the bringing money."

The men with the rattans were around me in a moment.

"He's mine!" said one. "You looked at me first, I think, sir?"

"No, he didn't. Wasn't you the young gentleman as spoke to me back of the Horse Guards, and made the appointment yesterday evening?"

I looked at them, and said to the fattest—

"I want to speak to you, if you please."

"Why, he's only the Ingey service; he ain't a reg'lar at all," exclaimed a Sergeant of Marines.

"You know, Mattocks, you ain't going to inveigle that young gentleman to have his liver burnt out of him?" argued a hoarse-voiced cavalry man.

"And the Company never pays nobody," observed another.

"And you'll be among a set of blacks and savages if you take on there," shouted another.

"And here's fine hussar and dragoon ridgments —the R'yal Artillery——"

"And here are fut ridgments, where they make a smart chap, if he's a gentleman like yourself, sergeant, in a few months, and give him a commission for nothing, in less than no time!"

Many voices were in my ears, but Sergeant Mattocks had me by the arm and led me down the narrow street in which soldiers were lounging about the dingy beer-houses, and frowsy women were standing at the doorways. The soldiers as we passed looked at my captor enviously.

"There's Mattocks again!"—"He's a young 'un this time!"—"That's a thirty pounder, I'm thinking, Bill!" The burly sergeant conducted me with dignity to his particular quarters in the back parlour of the "Wellesley Arms." Flaming pla-

cards of most brilliant young cavaliers cleaving to the chine turbaned foes all over jewels, stuck in the windows, invited all "Lads of Spirit to enter the most noble service of the Honourable East India Company—a Bounty of £5 !—a Free Kit !—a Free Passage !—Speedy Promotion !—a Glorious Career ! —Splendid Prize Money !—Full Pensions !"

The Honourable East India Company offered these and many other advantages to recruits for cavalry, artillery, and infantry, in a cheerful, warm country full of palaces and gold mohurs, pearls and diamond mines, where snow and cold were unknown; and where at the present moment there were unusual prospects, as there was a certainty of war. Sergeant Mattocks would open that El Dorado to all comers.

The windows of the "George the Fourth" and of the "Marlborough Arms," close at hand, were given up to similar announcements for the benefit of various branches of the regular army. Around these hostelries were loutish, uncouth, shambling men and boys, whose slovenly bearing and poor attire offered a strong contrast to the spruce, well set-up, jauntily dressed "touters" for the service of the country.

"What'll ye have to drink ?" quoth Sergeant

Mattocks, showing a handful of gold and silver. "Only name it."

"Nothing, if you please."

"Then, Mary my dear, send in a half pint of fine sherry wine to my parlour till we drink this dashing, gallant young gentleman's health! Mary! B'l'eve you me! This here young gentleman will come back—aye, afore two years are out—a commissioned officer. Mark my words—There!"

There was a compassionate look in the girl's face as she carried in the sergeant's sherry to the den, reeking with the odour of spirits and tobacco smoke and cheese, in which he had his "office." An old leaden inkstand and stumpy pens, some printed papers, and a blotting pad lay on a table battered and dinted all over with enthusiastic pewter noggins. The sergeant surveyed me now more closely.

"And you want to list, Mr. Brady? A good fighting name. There's many of them goes to glory in war times. Five feet eight, I should say; and what a chest he's got—teeth all right? As good a bit of stuff as ever *I* sent—that's all I can say. Not an apprentice? No! *That's* all right. Parents living? No! Good again. Any

guardians or guvernors to object or to buy you out?—I will risk it. Age"—Sergeant Mattocks' face fell. "*Never!* I ne-ver would b'leeve it! You must make a mistake. Bless you! *I* know what men is, and I know what boys is; and I tell you, you'll never see seventeen. So, be a man, and say so. Seventeen shall we say; last birthday?"

"No; I tell you the truth."

The sergeant bit his pen.

"You'll take the shilling, any way? I can enlist you for the reg'lars; they're not so petickler as my Company—Let me see. Praps you'd be seventeen if you come to-morrow? Take the shilling now, and we'll chance it."

"Chance what?"

Now it had never entered into my head but that the instant I agreed to enlist I was to put on my uniform, go off to my regiment, and begin my duty. And now I found that I should have to go before a magistrate; that I should have to be examined like a beast for the slaughter; that forms, oaths, and attestations, must prelude the career which to my mind ought to be inaugurated by knightly vow, such as Dunois would have sworn on the cross of his true blade.

"No! if I cannot go off at once I will not enlist

at all; I will not begin my life by a falsehood. The sergeant sighed heavily, but his arguments were in vain.

"You must have been in dreadful battles?" I said to the desponding Mattocks as I gave him half a sovereign for "the sherry and his trouble." "What a number of medals and ribands you have!"

"I never have seen powder burnt in my life, except at reviews, and the like; and, what's more, never mean to," replied Sergeant Mattocks, with a grin. "Why, there's the advantage of the servis. They doesn't reward a chap as had the chance, and punish a chap as hadn't the chance. That's what I call fair and honourable; and it's a thing to think of, too, if you're coming this way to-morrow, or next day, when the tin is short, or the guvnor's cross, or the young lady wont look at you. Here's Googearat! Well, I wasn't within twenty miles of my ridgment then, but the ridgment got it, and so did I. That's for Chuckewall. I was there; but then, you see, I was in charge of the baggage of my company. And as I tell you, there isn't one of the whole of 'em I didn't get without being in the way of the lead. So think of that, too. There's an advantage for you."

My cabman was waiting at the corner still.

"Did you take the shilling, young gen'elman? It will be a matter of thirty pounds if you take the next step after you're before the beak. Most of the young swells pass that, I think."

The sergeants at the corner regarded me with interest as I got into the cab. They waited anxiously for Sergeant Mattocks, who with a false air of "the Marquis of Granby" about him, was waddling up the street flourishing his cane in the air like a marshal's baton, to hear how I had escaped. I had still another string left to my poor feeble bow.

The cabman laughed when I told him to "drive to the place where they enlisted sailors."

"It's Ratcliff Highway, I believe; but I ain't sure. We'll ask when we git there."

What a drive it was! Shops and streets, streets and shops, churches, narrow lanes, great buildings, the footways thronged with people, and the roll of wheels for ever rising like the noise of the seas!

The driver pulled up at last opposite the door of a public-house, outside which were numerous placards with the pictures of ships in full sail speeding calmly and prosperously to all parts of the world—New York,

Philadelphia, Boston, Buenos Ayres, Leghorn, China, Bombay, Calcutta. There was indeed the world to choose from!

Next to the public-house was a small tenement of wood like a cobbler's stall. Over the door was inscribed "Shipping Office for Mariners. By Royal Authority." There were some half-dozen men in jackets, straw-hats, or old tarpaulins, seated on a bench, who made way for me as I entered, with wild misery's mark on them stamped by themselves.

"Have you ever been to sea afore?" asked a squalid old Jew, behind a sort of counter, as soon as the cabman had introduced me as "a young gen'elman who wanted to engage as a sailor."

"No—never."

"Then of course you know you'll have to pay something? I can get you a nice ship; the captain's a perfect shentleman—Captain Morrish; he shail to the Bight of Benin, a beautiful plashe; lovely young ladies. Ain't they, Sheik? Tell the shentleman vot you knosh of Captain Morrish, of the *Palm of Peash.*"

A swarthy Krooman in bare feet, ragged calico shirt and drawers, with his head bound in a coloured cotton handkerchief, thumped the counter.

"Let young massa go *Palma Peace*. Oh, she de ship! sail like duck. Captain Mors! Oh, Lor' a massy! He make she go and ebbery one, sure-lie."

"Captain Morrish take no one but first-rate shwell shentlemen. He get a hundred poundsh for the two voyage. But he ish my friend. Say fifty pun', and we'll see vot we can do."

"I say, Ikey," shouted a brawny fellow who had been listening, "none of that, you know. Morris hain't been long out of trouble for the last affair. Very like murder that was, Master Ikey. See here, young gentleman, if you want to go to —— at once—go. But don't take it out by the day, as you would with 'Murdering Morris' of the coast trade."

The Jew raised his fist menacingly, with a scowl on his brow. "Leave my offish, you rascal! Tiger Bill, I'll make you pay for this! Give me monish you owsh me, you scoundrel! If I don't let Captain Morrish know vot you said, you see. Get out of my offish, you rascal!"

The Krooman, watching the Jew's eye, threw himself between the sailor and me, exclaiming—"Yes, Tiger Bill, you get out of dis." Ere the words had well left his lips a tremendous blow from Tiger Bill sent him under the counter. In an

instant there was a horrid commingling of oaths in strange tongues, the Krooman leaped to his feet, knives were drawn, and all the wretched crew of the "royal shipping-office" beat to quarters for a battle. I rushed into the street and made for the cab. An iron grip was laid upon my arm. Turning in angry terror I encountered the astonished gaze of Jack Window.

"Terry Brady, by all that's wonderful! In the name of Heaven, what are you doing here?"

I could only seize his hand, and say—

"Oh, Mr. Window!—Oh, dear Jack Window, how glad I am to see you! Let's get away from this dreadful place. I'll tell you all!"

"This is but a Wapping row. We have these things night and day here. But come, my dear boy, come along, and explain this mystery of mysteries."

We got into the cab, and I told Jack all my story since we parted as we drove towards the Temple.

When I finished, his great round eyes, which had been opening wider than before at every sentence, were marvellous in size and roundness.

"You mustn't do it, my lad. Stick to your

friends. You're too old for the navy. You can't begin at your time of life the work of cabin-boy; at best you would become an ordinary sailor—a miserable waister, hauling on pulleys and tackles all your life, when you're not drunk in a crimp's public or lying up at hospital. No!—better jump into the river there at once! Why should you jump into anything, except into some snug berth at home? It strikes me all you Irish are a little wrong in the upper story. And what about the trout? How much I should like one more day up that Dodder."

"I wrote to you twice," he continued; "but somehow I've a knack of not posting my letters. I managed for once in my life to be lucky. I have commissioned the *Barnacle*, and shall be off to the West Indies in a week—that is, if ever the *Barnacle* gets there. I'm picking up men now, and if you'd gone a little further down the street you would have seen my flag flying out of the 'Mother Carey's Chicken.'"

When we got to the Temple, Standish was waiting for me at the top of the staircase.

"Mr. Standish," I said, "here is my friend, Lieutenant Window, whom I met by the merest accident."

"Aye, by Jove, sir!" exclaimed Window, "and in Ratcliff Highway, too, just bolting from a row in a Jew's crimping-house."

"I've been so anxious about you," said Standish. "I have news for you. Mr. Bates will be back to-night, and I hope he will remove you from the temptations of Wapping."

A knocking at the door interrupted him. It was the cabman.

"It's been a long job, sir," he said, "from Vestminster to Ratcliff Highway, and a halting here and there, and a driving to and fro. It's a good five hours, and I hope the young gentleman wont give me less than fifteen shillings."

I put my hand in my pocket. The old leather purse which had belonged to my grandfather was gone, and with it all my little store of money—the crisp note, sovereigns and silver, and the old seven-shilling gold bit that I had kept in every vicissitude.

I clapped my hand on my side—the old gold watch was gone too.

"And what the deuce else could you expect in the company you've been keeping?" asked Window. "It's very well you've got any clothes left on your back."

"And you could not tell me you were going to

run off to sea! And what were you doing at Westminster, may I ask?" said Standish, reproachfully, as the cabman retired. "Going to enlist, perhaps?"

"The very thing," replied I, grumpily. "You told me you had thoughts of doing so yourself once on a time."

"Aye! But I had not a friend in the world to help me."

"He's in a bad frame of mind, sir," ejaculated Jack Window.

There was a knock at the door. I heard the voice of Mr. Bates. I rushed out, seized his hand, and, touched by the kindness of his look, threw my arms round him, and buried my face on his breast.

That morning all had appeared to me blank, dreary, and dark—a waste over which shone a feeble ray it would be mockery to call hope. Now all seemed brightening; friends were turning up around me. Standish insisted that we all should dine in his little room.

Mrs. Chandler was in requisition, and summoned to her aid a myrmidon, who was if possible more decomposed, ghostlike, and mouldy than herself. Two waiters from the "Cock and Mitre" toiled upstairs and down bearing dishes with metallic covers, like fragments of ancient armour;

and over a bottle of port, which was conveyed in great state and dignity from the cellar of Mr. Twister, who "lent it, with his compliments, to Mr. Standish," a family council was held, in which Mr. Bates expounded the situation.

"I consider it very fortunate that this young gentleman should have met with one of whose industry and talent I have heard so much, Mr. Standish; very fortunate, too, in gaining the friendship of such a gallant and distinguished officer as Mr. Window. We all know at the other side of the water how you saved the poor emigrants on the *Meraboo*, sir. Well, as I am saying, there is, Mr. Standish, a young gentleman making a name for himself by hard work, striving night and day to advance himself, who is the delight of agreeable societies of literary men, and marked already for fortune in an honourable profession——"

Mr. Bates was fond of an oration now and then—(the second bottle of port from Twister's had come up, and was meeting its fate). He went on—

"Here is Captain Window, who has made his way too, as I am told, by sheer attention to duty and by high personal character. Now, with such examples before you, and with the fortunes of an ancient family to retrieve, are you, Terence,

to abandon everything for a chimæra, and forget your duty and yourself? You have told us of what you saw at the recruiting station, and of the scene in the sailors' shipping-office. But it was almost an accident which prevented you, a Brady of Lough-na-Carra, becoming a private in an Indian regiment, or a common sailor before the mast. This lad's guardian with me is Sir Richard Desmond of Kilmoyle. I had to go over to arrange matters. But that's little good to us. He has been at Wiesbaden to try the waters; but he tried something else that wasn't good for his health of body or pocket. The moment he leaves his niece behind him, he goes over head and ears into mischief; and when I saw him at Boulogne, where he came to meet me, as if I was always travelling with a few odd thousands in my note-case, and could arrange everything at once, he was looking, Terry, just as if he ought to be making his will, and a good job if he would make it before all Kilmoyle goes. There's a hint of a duel he had about some high play at Wiesbaden; and there were other hints, too, though I can't believe them. Anyway, it all comes to this. The little money—of course I say this among friends—that was lent long ago by the dear old doctor—and very little it was—

cannot be got at unless I put the screw on, and then we would be in an awkward position——"

"My dear Mr. Bates," I interrupted, "I would sooner work my fingers to the bone than let Sir Richard be annoyed about money of mine. Indeed, I never was aware of its existence at all till this moment."

"Bravo," exclaimed Jack Window, who was always in favour of anything impracticable in money matters. "I always said the boy was good."

"Well," continued Mr. Bates, "I am glad to hear what you have said as a mere expression of feeling towards Sir Richard, poor man. I don't suppose it would do much good if we were to press him; for without horse-racing, or great living, or show, or indeed anything but a watering-place now and then, he manages to run through every penny he has, and it's getting very low water with him now, I can assure you. We talked of you. He insisted on your getting a commission. I told him all about the railway accident, and your escapade to London. I pointed out to him the impossibility of your entering the service with your present means, and he felt bitterly that he couldn't help the grandson of his old friend. 'One night's work undone would enable me to act towards the boy as I could

wish.' I have the best reasons for knowing he has no money now. If he were on good terms with Denis he would ask him; but I know Mr. Desmond felt great anger to your father after he married; and they say he is an implacable man. The only thing we can do now is to face the situation. Come back with me to Ireland to-morrow. We will decide what ought to be done. God knows I will act for the best, at all events."

CHAPTER III.

HOW I BECAME DR. BRADY.

And so next day it was I turned my back on London. As I was packing up my little portmanteau, I took out the leaves and flowers which had fallen from the bouquet and hid them deep down in my little store of finery, and the colour mounted to my cheek, all alone as I was. I bade good-by to Jack Window and Standish with many assurances of friendship. They saw me off to the train.

"Look out for me in the papers. The *Barnacle*, you know, Terence! And send me a line now and then, my dear lad. I'll be sure to answer you this time; I will not keep the letters in my pocket. When you are at all inclined to grumble, look out of your window, and perhaps you'll see a beggar or a cripple, and if that don't set you right, what will? God bless you!"

"And mind, whenever you come to London you

will have as much as we can divide between three; for I hope to be married very soon," said Standish. "Now, no thanks—not one word! Why what do you think Mr. Bates has done? He has given me a promise of a brief that will set me up my very first term—and all for doing nothing!"

And so we parted, and, as it happened, to meet again. They must have fancied I was an unaccountable and perverse boy! Even to myself it appeared as if I were so. My movements were determined by accidents—my life influenced by trifles. One said, "Do this," and I did it, heedless whether he were a centurion or no; and yet at times another coming with authority could not constrain my course.

A settled purpose which I dared not avow to myself led me, nevertheless, as an unseen hand will guide one in the dark, and he knows whose hand it is all the while though he cannot see it.

"I have been thinking seriously, Terry, that the only thing for you is to become a surgeon," said Mr. Bates one evening after my arrival, as we sat in the dining-room of his gaunt mansion in Dominick-street. "What do you think? How would you like to follow your grandfather's profession?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, not much, sir. I

have no taste, I fear, for the work: besides, I understood long ago I was to enter the army."

"Ah, things have changed, my dear Terry—terribly changed since that was thought of. Sir Richard and I have been discussing the whole matter, and he quite agrees with me now that the army without money is a bad thing. You see, there is literally nothing coming in from Lough-na-Carra. The rent we get does little more than pay the interest on the mortgages; it would be as well to sell the whole of the property, such as it is, outright, but for your grandfather's wishes—and, indeed, our own natural wish to keep it as long as we can for you, in case of a turn of fortune."

"But then it will need money to make me a doctor, sir, wont it?"

"So it will, Terry—or, rather, so it would; but your grandfather's old friend, Sir Philip Hampton, will be delighted to take you as a pupil for love, as he says. You will not be a doctor, but a surgeon, you know—next thing to being a soldier: cutting off legs and arms, and that sort of thing——"

"I wouldn't like it, sir," interrupted I; "though it's very kind of Sir Philip, I'm sure."

"Like it," said Mr. Bates, repeating my words,

and looking at me, as much as to say—"You have no right to have any voice in the matter," as guardians do say sometimes. "You wouldn't like it, eh? Then, what would you like to be? I tell you, Terry, if we bought you a commission to-morrow, it would be a last incumbrance on the property, and yet you could not live on your pay; and then where is the money for your steps to come from? If Sir Richard were rich, or if I—— well, that's out of the question."

Little I thought that the noble young gentlemen I admired, with something like fear, as they clanked down Grafton-street, were all so much interested in a great pecuniary speculation, in which promotions and exchanges, retirements, and deaths played an important part.

"No," continued Mr. Bates; "if you accept Sir Philip's offer, you step at once into the profession under the best auspices. What else is there? There's the Church! There's not a living in the gift of any of us; besides, you have no call, I think, that way—and I really do believe (he added with an air of regretful conviction) it is not quite right for a man to go into the Church unless he's pretty steady and has a serious turn. Just think of the awful declaration! How some of them do it is

more than I can fancy, though God knows their hearts best."

I did not put in any claim for the Church, and merely nodded my head in assent when Mr. Bates had finished.

"Then there's the law," he resumed. "Now, Terry, look at me—To begin with attorneys: you know how I work; you see me for hour after hour, day after day, in that dingy room, with those old tin boxes—how I'm summoned here and sent for there—But I have friends, and am supposed to be doing what's called a good business! Yet I declare to you, after paying that old Mooney, the head clerk, and the office people, rent and expenses, advancing fees I don't get, and the like, I can only just grope on."

Mr. Bates did not mention that he kept a good table and excellent cellar, and filled the one and emptied the other as fast as he could.

"And then, I don't know how it is, over here an attorney is not as big a man as he is in England. They call some of them solicitors there—it's more genteel. The men who will come to you and take up your time for hours, and call you "Bates, my boy," or "Bates, my good friend," will all but cut you in the street among their great acquaintances.

Why, there's that dirty little scamp, Lord Belmire! Didn't I give up whole months to him and his affairs, and get him on his legs, and when I sent in my bill of costs, hang me if he hadn't the insolence to say he would have them taxed, and that he never was more astonished in his life than when he saw the account at all, as he supposed I was acting for him in a friendly manner."

"And what did you do, sir?"

"I wrote to the puppy to say, that unfortunate as I was in ever having known him, I was not so unlucky as to feel any friendship for him. I made him a present of the costs. By Jove, Terry, if I had been a counsellor I'd have kicked him. There's the disadvantage of being an attorney."

"Well, but a barrister, sir?"

"Oh, if you knew all the misery!—the disappointed hopes, the blighted lives, the grinding poverty, and hopelessness—hid under the wig and gown, you would sooner break stones on the road than enter on the contest! Assuredly the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. The strong do vanquish, and the swift do reach the goal, of course, sometimes. But you are not of the stuff of which silk gowns or judge's robes are made, my

boy. Some of the soundest lawyers and the best scholars I know are going about the Four Courts with empty bags, covering their penury with their tattered, faded gowns."

"And why don't you employ them, sir?"

"Because they're not the men to get on with judges, or with juries. The attorney must look to that. And so, poor fellows, they starve on and die. No, indeed, Terry, nothing that I can see promises so well for you as to become a surgeon. And then," he added triumphantly, "if you do, as I said, there's the army open for you. You can be an army surgeon, remember; wear the uniform, travel about, and gratify all your longings for seeing foreign countries, instead of sticking over a desk at home."

It was evident my guardians had made up their minds. I could do no better. As Mr. Bates spoke, I was thinking of the dark hovels into which I had penetrated with my grandfather long ago, and the scenes I had witnessed in the dwellings of the poor —the levées at the dispensary door—the sufferings and the cries of pain; I remembered, too, how the old man's path lay amid the blessings of the poor, and felt that in his calm and happy life—happy, in the main, for years—he had wiped away many a

tear, healed many a tortured spirit, and done more good for the poor and distressed of the world than all the soldiers who ever drew a sword. That was abstract reflection. The philosophy of it did not at all tend to satisfy me that I ought to be a surgeon; and, to tell the truth, I was only reconciled to the idea at all by the development into uniform and the sword attached, which Mr. Bates had knowingly shadowed out at the end of his argument. However, I was beaten. The fond hopes of my childhood, that I should one day be as Graf von Brady, Field-Marshal in the armies of his Imperial Majesty, clad in armour, riding over prostrate infidels, truncheon in hand; or as General Don Felix O'Brady y Vasquez, in surcoat of steel, with lace collar and ruffles, and trunk-hose, leading a charge of grim pikemen; or even as Captain Brady, in modest scarlet and silver, and Hessian boots, storming the fortress of Lall Sing—all were dashed to the ground. At all events, I could wear the scarlet and the sword, and if I were not to lead armies, I could cure them, and try to undo the ruin the warriors had made. But how much I had to sacrifice no one could ever tell or know but myself. In my day dreams there was one constant abiding image, object, and end; I dared scarce probe my

heart to find it, but I knew it was there. Oh, what castles I had built in cloudland, at the door of which always stood a certain little person with the brightest eyes, the loveliest smile, the most winning frankness and simplicity in the world! How I exulted in my soul as I was riding up the grand avenue amid flourishes of trumpets and rows of garlanded maidens, to lay the spoils of victory at her feet! What feats of chivalry I performed in the press of knights, seeing through the tossing plumes, and flashing armour, and glittering lances, the one fair face, for ever beaming on me, till triumphant I knelt before her to receive the prize of Honour! I sighed for the days of old, that I might seek the lists of another Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and cleaving my way through hosts of bevizored caitiffs, bear her favours o'er the field. It was hard to abandon all those high aspirings. They were not real nor likely to be realized. I awoke at times, and then I knew that sort of chivalry was no more, but I could not see the chivalry of the lancet. Could I ever win her by any efforts of successful surgery? My most romantic musings fled at the notion. The plain, hard prose of matter-of-fact existence was before me—a dry, harsh lesson to be learnt every day, and to become drier and harsher as time sped on.

I went to Sir Philip Hampton's house in Merrion-square early one morning, as my guardian directed me; but, early as it was, he was engaged. The sleek, smooth, "own man" of the great surgeon showed me into a room filled with people. They were all so grave, they might have been taken for a congregation at church. There sat the mother with her child, smoothing his pale brow, as he turned listlessly over the engravings in a book on her knee—there fretted restlessly on his chair the man of pleasure, who had come to seek at Sir Philip's hands the health he had cast away for ever—there, in patient suffering, drooped the wan girl, whose hectic flush and short sharp cough marked her for the grave—there the hypochondriac, with her endless tale of pain, all the more terrible because imaginary—robust youth arrested in its career by some sharp and sudden admonition of coming evil—the halt, the maimed—waiting and longing till the moment, often dreaded yet so much desired, when the beckoning finger and nod of the janitor of the prison should summon each of them to the presence.

At every tinkle of the little bell, Strong, the "own man," appeared, list in hand, and one of the congregation rose at his bidding and glided out of the room, followed by the envious eyes of the rest.

Knock after knock announced fresh visitors, who added new types of sorrowful humanity to the crowd. Coughs, little moans, suppressed sighs, the rustling of silks, the creakings of chairs and boots, or the twitter of the leaves of books and papers, never ceased; but no one spoke save in the lowest whispers.

Occasionally they all looked up and became animated for a moment, for through the opening door, now and then, there burst a startling peal of laughter and the cheery voice of Sir Philip was heard as he came to the door of his study and bade adieu to his patients—

"Get well? Sure of it! Of course you will. Do as I tell you, and 'pon my honour we'll have many a day with the garrison hounds yet."—"Yes, indeed, my dear young lady!—When you come back I expect to have an early invitation to your wedding!" And then the pleasant voice would be shut out, and the wheels would rumble off with some comforted invalid.

It seemed as if the morning would never pass. I got quite tired of the anxious mother and the pale-faced boy. An old gentleman next me, who had crossed his legs and uncrossed them every two minutes for the last hour, nearly drove me into

a frenzy, and the poor girl with the hectic flush and the short cough, whom I had been watching with sorrowful interest, had been dismissed. What comfort Sir Philip had for her, Heaven knows!

The new-comers were generally reduplications of the departed visitors. The door opened at last for one who at once attracted my attention. Supporting his feeble steps on a stick, his stately form bent, his face so changed I did not recognise it at the first glance, Sir Richard Desmond entered, leaning on the arm of Mary Butler. My breath came fast; I felt the blood rush to my face as her dress swept over my feet. A vacant chair just left by a patient was beside me; and as the invalid settled himself slowly into it whilst Mary held his hand, she caught sight of my face and nodded a recognition.

"Uncle, look who is beside you! It is Terence—Terence Brady, you know."

Sir Richard turned his dull eye upon me, and took my proffered hand as I stood up to make room for his niece. His fingers were cold, and clammy, and thin; they put me in mind of a grasp of Jocko's hand long ago.

"Hallo! what are you doing here, Terence?" he said, in a thick, gasping voice; "you are not come for Sir Philip's aid, I am sure, my man?"

"No, sir, except in one way. I am going to be his pupil, I know—as you and Mr. Bates agreed, sir," I added, after a pause, in order to let Mary be aware I had not selected the profession from my own free will. "And he sent for me to be here to-day."

"Ah! what would I give to be in your place, Terry," sighed Sir Richard. "Look at me!" he whispered, as I approached him; "a mere broken, miserable wreck, about to sink just as you are rising to the surface! You—young, healthy, full of hope, the future all light and joyous—I, old before my time, without hope or light or happiness—my endless future near at hand! Nay, Mary, I'm not going to complain!—I want this lad to see what some years of what is called careless living may do with him. That horrible bell!—it sets my nerves on edge."

He leant his chin on his stick, and Mary and I exchanged looks. What mine expressed I cannot say; hers were full of sympathy. Those eloquent eyes merely said, "See how he suffers!" She put his hand in her own, but he jerked it away impatiently, looked at his watch, and muttered to himself. Sir Philip generally gave about five minutes to each patient, and I counted that there were still ten to go before him. So I said—

"Miss Butler, I fear Sir Richard will have to wait an hour yet."

"Do you think Sir Philip would see him before some of the others?"

His quick ears heard the whisper.

"An hour!" he growled. "It would kill me. I'm scarcely able to breathe now, I'm so fagged—for we have travelled all night. I was tired of those London fellows. Mary and I left only yesterday. If I could see Strong I might manage it——or see here, Terry! go out and tell him I must see Sir Philip at once. It's an urgent case. Take this purse and tip him, you know. It's his way, I'm told."

I went out. In a few moments more Strong appeared at the door and beckoned to Sir Richard Butler. The old gentleman whose proper turn it was got up and left his seat, but Strong said—

"Not yet, Mr. Tandy, if you please! Sir Philip told me to ask your pardon, ladies and gentlemen, for breaking the order; but this gentleman needs immediate attention, and would have been here first only there was a bad passage from England."

And amid a fire of angry glances and muttered indignation, Sir Richard hobbled away, helped to the door by Mary and the "own man."

She returned, and I sat down beside her, but I did not venture to speak.

"Poor uncle is very ill, Mr. Brady. Does he not shock you?" (Why was I "Mr. Brady" instead of "Terence," I wonder?)

"Very, very ill, indeed, Miss Butler! I am pained to see it."

"They say, in London, there is little hope he will ever be quite well, though he may yet live a long time. We have been going from place to place all over Europe nearly. We were at Pau, and the baths in the Pyrenees lately, after we had tried half the watering-places in the world, I think, for a day at a time. Aunt has been quite exhausted by our rapid travelling; and the only comfort I have is, I am so strong nothing upsets me, for my uncle would be miserable if I were obliged to leave him to wander alone. We only came to London three days ago from Aix-la-Chapelle, and I should not be astonished if we were not longer in Dublin."

"And are you not tired, Miss Butler?"

"What is the use of being tired if it's one's duty not to be so? In his heart my uncle is so kind to me, I feel I ought not to complain if he were even exacting. Besides, it is not he—it is his

illness which makes us suffer! And so you are going to be a surgeon, Mr. Brady?"

"I am, Miss Butler," I answered, with a little quaver in my voice.

Oh! shade of Ivanhoe, of Quentin Durward, of Sir Launcelot!—is it come to this? Such a confession to make to the little Ladye of the Castle!

"My guardians think it best, as I shall not be rich enough to go into the army as an officer—a fighting one, I mean."

"And much better, too," said Mary Butler. "You will be a friend to the poor, as your dear grandfather was; you will perform the noblest of all good works next to those of the ministers of God. Oh! I'm so glad you are not going to spend your life with a sword tied to your side, idling from place to place; or in time of war fighting against people who have fathers and mothers and sisters to lament them if they fall, and whom you can have no right to kill. I am so very, very glad for your sake, and all your friends."

"Friends! I have few. If I fell—I mean, if I died—I should have neither father, nor mother, nor sister to lament me; and as to friends—well there would be, perhaps, Mr. Bates and Maurice

Prendergast, and some of the old people at home—at least, at what was once my home."

"Well, you are not going to die just at present! At all events, you really are unkind to leave us all out at the Castle. Why am I not to be your friend, Mr. Brady—your oldest friend, too? And there is my uncle, who is your guardian—and Major Turnbull, who is often asking after you——"

My breath came thick; I looked into her face—that sweet, fair, candid face, with its inquiring eyes—as she repeated—

"Why do you say you have no friends except Mr. Bates and that gloomy Maurice, and the old servants, when I am sitting beside you? Or will you only admit me to be an acquaintance?"

"Oh! if you knew how I long to speak! To be your friend as of old is my greatest desire. Will you—will you be indeed my friend——"

At this moment the door opened, and Sir Richard made his appearance with Strong.

"I am sorry," he said, with a low bow addressed to all in the room, "to have interfered in the due reception of Sir Philip's patients, but in fact I believed I was a dying man; and assuredly I will never cause any wrong of the kind to any lady or

gentleman here again. Come, Mary, let us go. We must, if you are strong enough for the journey, leave to-night—that is, if I be alive. Good-bye, Terry: I shall hear of you from Bates; and you can write to me. Or stay, you can send a line for me to Miss Butler, if it be anything pressing you would like to say to me. She will give you an address that will always find us, if we are not in Ireland or London."

I followed the invalid, and saw him into the carriage at the door. Mary Butler took out a little card and pencil, and wrote on it the address of Latouche and Co., Bankers, Dublin, and gave me her hand with a smile, as she said—

"Good-bye, Terence—(why am I "Terence" and not "Mr. Brady" now?)—I'm so delighted to think when you are old you will not be like Major Turnbull, fond as we are of him, with nothing to do but play billiards, tell stories of storming castles, and killing tigers, and take care of all that remains of his liver. Good-bye, and mind! Work hard, and let uncle Richard know how you are getting on!"

"Is there—is there any answer to my last question?"

"Question!—what question?" asked Sir Richard,

impatiently. "You wont keep us all the morning Terence, if you please."

Mary Butler, with her eyes turned full on me, said very simply—

"Mr. Brady has taken it into his head he has no friend at Kilmoyle; and what he wants to know is, if I am his friend. Did you ever hear anything so absurd?—as if we could be anything else. I'm sure we shall be friends all our life; wont you, uncle?"

Sir Richard only gave a nod, and waved his hand to the footman to close the door.

"And so," finished Mary, kissing her hand and smiling as she spoke, "the answer to the last question is—Yes, of course. Good-bye again."

I leaped up the steps into the hall, where Mr. Strong was standing.

"And so you're one of the Bradys of Lough-na-Carra? Why didn't you tell me who you was when you came? Sir Philip's been askin' for you, and he'll soon be ready for you. You know Sir Richard Desmond, I see, and his purty niece. And a nice ending Sir Richard beyant there is making," he added, jerking his head in the direction of the carriage. "I b'leve he came here instead of sending for Sir Philip to save the fees. That was not

always the way wid the Desmonds. Now they're poor as church mice, anyway. Come this way now, and you'll soon see the masther."

He led me to a veritable chamber of horrors. "Curious cases," in jars and bottles, were ranged on shelves round the room; the terrible work wrought by disease or by freaks of nature on the human frame reproduced in wax surrounded us on the walls. At the end, half concealed by a curtain, which only rendered its blanched bones more awful to me, as yet new to such sights, stood, nicely-articulated, a skeleton on its pedestal. Skulls of various shapes and sizes were arranged in a cabinet, labelled not with the names of the owners, but with the styles and titles of the races of which they were held to be craniological types. I surveyed the scene with terror and disgust.

Mr. Strong slightly flicked away some dust off the skeleton with his handkerchief, as he remarked, "That's Mat Costigan, the coal-porter. Sir Philip did that when he was a studyent, and an iligant thing it is. Whin you look at Sir Phil, you'll see the mark of a clip over his eye he got from the boys when the young docthors were getting away with Costigan's body. Mat was six foot six, and a terrible fighter," proceeded Mr. Strong. "Look at

the dents in his head. He was a bewtiful made man, and Sir Phil detarmined to have him, and the boys were detarmined he shouldn't, and they had a battle royal in the churchyard; but the docthors had the best of it—though Leeson (him that has the great practice in Limerick now) had one of his eyes out, and Dr. Little had his arm bruk! There's Sir Philip's bell."

And Strong vanished, leaving me to study all that remained of Mat Costigan. Little did I think as I drew the curtain to cover the grinning horror, that it would be my fate to see so many forms of death, and to hear my horse's hoofs crunch through whitening bones, which were all the vultures had left. I sat with averted face pondering over the work before me, much doubting if it ever could become a labour of love.

Mary Butler approved of it. What of that? What was Mary Butler to me? I, a poor lad, without rank or fortune; she so beautiful and so rich; the heiress, all the world said, of a great Indian, the petted favourite of Sir Richard Desmond. And then I thought, if I ever became like Sir Philip Hampton, would Mary still look down on me. Pshaw! what folly am I dwelling on now? Work, Master Terence, work on.

I was summoned at last to the room which so many had entered that morning with heavy hearts; and I remembered Jack Condon's prescription as I was ushered in to Sir Philip Hampton. He raised his eyes,—as much sagacity as kindness in the glance,—nodded his head, and, pointing to a chair, wrote on for a few moments, whilst I studied his outward appearance. There was no affectation of professional gravity about the man. He was dressed in the height of fashion of the time, in its brightest style—a blue dress coat, with high velvet collar, tight sleeves, and gilt buttons—a lavender-coloured vest—a blue handkerchief, with white spots —pale grey pantaloons, tightly strapped over varnished boots—and he flourished a perfumed silk handkerchief in his hand, now and then in war against the flies. The room had a delicate odour of flowers, which stood in stands along the walls; a library of richly-bound volumes; pictures, fine engravings; busts in the niches—statues by Canova; a sea-nymph, wearing a garland, in one corner; in another a radiant Apollo — all was light and airy in the man and in all around him. I listened in silence to the sketch he drew of my future profession; and when he finished, all my doubts had vanished, and I became full of hope and resolution.

"And now, my young friend," said Sir Philip, putting his hand on my shoulder, "I have said all I can think of at present. You will begin lectures to-morrow at Park-lane."

He looked at his gold repeater, bundled up a roll of papers on his library table, and, humming an air from the latest opera, bounded out of his study and leaped into his carriage with the lightness of heart and step of a boy.

I was to enter Trinity College, to keep on at Greek and Latin, and, at the same time, to begin my course of lectures; but, to my great relief, I was to be reprieved for a time from the dissecting-room.

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE IN COLLEGE.

A FEW mornings after my first interview with Sir Philip, I was sitting in the rooms of the Rev. Dr. Gayler, one of the Fellows of Trinity College, eating an "Examination Breakfast." The custom was, in those days, for each of the Fellows to give his pupils, who were going up for entrance examination, a breakfast in his rooms. Maurice Prendergast was among those at table. He was in deep mourning, and looked pale and thin, but he had grown very tall.

"My dear Maurice!" "Terence Brady!" I rushed to seize his hand, and in my enthusiasm catching the end of the table-cloth, nearly dragged all the breakfast things off the table. Maurice had not much effusion in his manner, as I thought, but by Mr. Gayler's desire I sat beside him, and we conversed in whispers, whilst the others were as

busily engaged as their state of mind and preparation would admit, with the bounteous fare. We—a fat young fellow-commoner that was to be, with an early glass in his eye; a pensive mathematician, who was dreading the terrors of a Greek chorus; a classical prizeman from Dungannon, thinking of the coming *pons asinorum*, and mysterious equations; and a couple of rollicking dunces for once regretting the pleasant hours spent in hurling and hunting—were in all the glories of new gowns and trencher-caps.

"There are two of us," he said, "Rose and myself; and I must work for her, for my poor father has left us badly off."

"And what are you going to be, Maurice?"

"That is more than I can just say at present. You are going to be a surgeon, you say. I should not like that much."

"I suppose you'll try for a scholarship—maybe for a fellowship—you are such a clever fellow, Maurice?"

He looked at me, and a shade passed over his face as he replied, "Why, don't you know I can be neither? I belong to the old faith; as my fathers were before me, I am a Catholic. I could have gone to Maynooth; but I am not of the stuff

from which our priests are made. And I have come here to find how liberal and charitable our great University is to us Catholics in this Catholic land, and to work my way as I can. I will try the Bar. Perhaps, if I turn traitor to my party, for I have a party—the party of the people, Terry—I may be rewarded with a Revising-Barristership, or even become a Commissioner of Insolvency."

There was always something bitter in Maurice's tone; and now his words almost hissed in my ear as two and two we walked across the court into the Examination-Hall, headed by Mr. Gayler.

It was a large examination; the tables in the great hall displayed a long array of students, boys and young men, and a few hard-featured, shabby schoolmasters or tutors in the country, who had saved up enough at last to begin the career for which they longed—a sizarship, a curacy in the distance. I sat beside Maurice, close to the statue of Provost Baldwin, gazing with something like awe at the group of Fellows round the stately reigning Provost, chatting as pleasantly as if some hundred and fifty pair of eyes were not watching them in suspense.

Maurice regarded them with a frown. "I wonder," he said, "how many of these gentlemen

are priests in their hearts. Is it not too absurd to insist on keeping old Trinity a Protestant convent? Latin and Greek and science would not avail a Scaliger here without the Thirty-nine Articles, celibacy, and holy orders. It is really too monstrous."

"Maurice, it strikes me, if you are not of the stuff of which priests are made, you certainly have the material of a dissenter."

"I think—which is more than you do, my good Terence."

Two days after we were assembled in the hall at Mr. Gayler's to hear our fate. "My pupils have done very well, on the whole. Maurice Prendergast, second place," he read from the list. "Very good, out of a hundred and fifty-two. My friend Dr. Ball will be delighted at your success, Prendergast."

Maurice, who stood with folded arms, said, "I expected to be better, sir."

"Better! Why, Knox, who got first, is two years older. Besides, he was at Rugby, and was one of Arnold's favourite pupils. You could not hope to beat Knox, and yet you are marked 'proximè accessit.'"

"I did not hope to beat Knox, or any one, sir;

I hoped to be first, that's all; and, perhaps, if I were not a Roman Catholic, the examiners would have found my claims as good as those of even Arnold's favourite, as you call him."

Mr. Gayler stared at his pupil, who met his look unmoved. "You impute disgraceful partiality, sir, to honourable men. Let me hear no more of such expressions."

"Sir," replied Maurice, "I should be sorry to lose your favour; and I am sure you are too just to censure me for speaking what I believe to be the truth. As the College itself draws so broad a line between the Catholic and the Protestant, it is not surprising a Catholic should entertain a suspicion that the Fellows act in the spirit of the establishment."

"I will not argue the question before my pupils, Prendergast," exclaimed Mr. Gayler. "See in the faces around you what an unpleasant spirit you excite already."

Maurice's lips curled with a bitter smile, and he looked defiantly at some of us who had drawn away from him as if to express their dislike.

I was twentieth—a very good place, Mr. Gayler was pleased to say. I had been to a grim old stone

house, called Draper's Hospital, and had entered my name for a course of lectures. I had also paid my fees at the College Anatomical School, and, lastly, I had "moved in" to No. 17, Botany Bay, Trinity College—a splendid suite of rooms in the quadrangle of that name, consisting of a black door, much battered and bruised, with a ponderous lock and bolt, over which "Terence Brady" was already glittering in white paint—a dirty-white door inside, much battered also, opening on a small passage, off which there was a limited coalhole and a very modest amount of cellarage—a gaunt, whitewashed room, on the walls of which were remains of the bold designs of a former tenant—a bedroom of smaller dimensions, and a little crypt for the use of Phinny Codd, my "gyp," who had been induced to include me in the list of the young gentlemen on whom he waited as general servitor. Mr. Bates had given me some of the furniture that lumbered his house, the walls were to be papered, and a great change was to be made in the aspect of my new abode. On my way from the hospital I called at Sir Richard Desmond's, in Merrion-square. The windows were closed, the paint blistering on the door; Mr. Vincent himself partook of the general aspect of decay.

"Sir Richard wont be back this year, I think; he wont have the house done up neither. Miss Mary, she is voyagin' about among them German baths, poor lady. Miss Desmond, the aunt, wont come back any more. She's stoppin' with friends, at Bath, Lord help them. Sir Richard and she had it out in London, and she said she'd go off to Masther Dinnis out in India to complain of him; but she's settlin' down in England, after all. And, shure, did you hear, Masther Terry, that Misther Dinnis wants to get Miss Mary out to him in India? To India, indeed; no less. Misther Dinnis was always mighty fond of his poor sister, Miss Mary's mother. Such a rage as Sir Richard was in, I'm told, when the letter came, you never see. And Miss Mary will lose the money maybe afther all, for Sir Richard has spent all the ready he could lay hands on, and it's little she'll have from him when he goes."

The idea of Mary Butler not being a great heiress was somehow very pleasant.

"They say Miss Mary could have made a great match in foreign parts. Misther Dinnis is a kind of king out there, and he could marry her to the King of Persia or of Turkey, or one of the likes of thim, as easy as shelling payse. But, anyhow, she

wont be let go, and she didn't want to go; and it's only who's good enough for her here I'm asking?—that's all."

I struggled with my distaste and prejudice, and faced the horrors of the charnel-house till I became familiar with the secrets of the prison in which life is kept till set free by death. I attended college lectures, read for weary hours, made fishing excursions in the mountains, and when the days were wild and stormy went down to the sea-coast in search of plover, curlew, and duck. A boisterous, clever fellow, named Bolton, who lived on the same floor, was by the mere power of staircase thrown into frequent contact with me. He was supposed to be reading for a fellowship, but he had not yet got his scholarship; and when "he sported his oak," and was believed to be sitting inside with a wet towel on his head, he was in reality engaged at a horse race, a game of billiards, or private theatricals. But he was careless and generous, ever ready to borrow as to lend, to fight or make friends, full of high spirits at one moment, at another plunged in despair. Maurice Prendergast, who lived in lodgings in the town, partly because they were cheaper, and partly, as he said, "because he did not want to be under the noxious surveillance of the college porters,"

came in now and then; but he grew more morose every day, wore a frieze coat and a "Repeal button," and attended all the meetings at Conciliation Hall. The great agitation was then at its height. The papers were filled with accounts of monster meetings, at which nearly every adult male in Ireland was reported to be present. The Roman Catholics within the College were a weak minority; but as the agitation grew in strength they became bolder, and angry arguments, not always confined to words, occurred more than once in our rooms.

"Come, at least, and see him, Terry. It is surely a phenomenon worth noting. To-day O'Connell will be at Conciliation Hall, and there can be no harm in your coming with me."

"But, Maurice, I am no politician. I cannot think the man who uses his eloquence, his ability, his unbounded power over the people, to delude them to pursue a phantom can be honest."

"A phantom, Terence? You think that Repeal is a kind of phantom?"

"Of the most shadowy and yet dangerous," I replied. "If the people are told they have wrongs, and are taught to look for the redress of their grievances to a remedy they can never have, they will look beyond the remedy at last. All this

agitation is but a preparation for rebellion. If you had back your old Parliament I don't think you would be much the better for it."

"Rebellion!" said Maurice, gloomily. "There's a spell in that word, I suppose. It's odd, too, it should have such terrors for Protestants. At any rate, you show little self-reliance if you refuse even to look on the face of the necromancer."

"Well, to prove my attachment to my principles is not so weak as you imagine, I will go with you."

It was a fine May-day; and as we turned into D'Olier-street the streams of people pouring in the same direction pointed out the way to Conciliation-Hall. There were decent citizens, poor mechanics, peasants in their frieze, coalheavers, carmen, and a few whose dress announced that they belonged to the better classes, tramping along, to hang on the words of their Idol and their Prophet.

Conciliation Hall could not boast of any exterior grace or attractiveness. A bald stucco front, narrow and high, with poor houses on the quay facing the lifeless Liffey, which only bore a fleet of colliers, bringing coals to Ireland and taking back money to England. Would not a vast Irish coal-field be

worth many Parliaments? Inside, a deep array of benches in a lofty hall, with a raised platform at one end, a table for the reporters, an elevated chair over it, and a gallery for ladies above. It was filled, early as it was; and as we were making our way to the reserved places on the platform which Maurice had obtained, a tremendous yell and cheer, mingled with stamping of feet, told us that the tall, broad round-shouldered man, who was entering at the head of a body of excited-looking gentlemen, was O'Connell himself.

Again and again the people shouted; and as the Liberator, taking off his Quaker-like hat, put on a green velvet cap with a gold band and gold shamrocks on it, and stood up on the estrade, there was an outburst which was hushed in a long "'sh!" when he raised his hand for silence. And he spoke —a rich, sonorous, rolling voice, full of the most varied expression; an eye of singular keenness, veiled by a slightly drooping lid, beneath which it played in a light all its own; a wonderfully plastic mouth, large yet fine, thin lipped, passionate; an action easy, natural, and yet dramatic; language not always elegant or correct, but never prosaic or purposeless—a great Tribune for such a people as he sought to sway. He was telling them

for the hundredth time the old familiar story which rang in every man's ears and fired his heart day after day—how their land was beautiful and its children were wretched—how their resources were infinite and their misery unparalleled—how they had been despoiled and trodden down by the stranger, who ruled in their palaces and monopolized the riches and honours of their state—how they must unite in their millions to get back their rights —display the strength of their brawny arms, and thunder in their might at the door of the oppressor —"By moral force, remember!—the greatest political advantage is not worth the shedding of a single drop of blood!"

And he sat down amid such an uproar as might have greeted Demosthenes when the fierce democracy broke up, and "Let us march against Philip!" rolled over land and sea. How men shouted and women wept, as for the hundredth time the refrain of the old song floated through the air, and with it the vision of an island fair and sunny, with ladies wearing rich and rare gems wandering from end to end of it—Malachi, in his collar of gold, carousing at Tara—the Red Branch knights tilting in Dublin Castle—the Pope in Stephen's-green—and processions of peers and commoners in saffron

robes, with the ancient moustache and tuft—playing harps on their way to College-green—how a wild fire ran through their hearts, and hate raged fiercer than before—need all that be wondered at? Subscriptions flowed freely in; they came from America, from Australia, from the isles of the sea where the exiles of the modern Judæa toiled and worked, in hope and yearning such as animates with a common object the People of the Promise.

Maurice sat beside me with quivering lip. "Well," I whispered, "I have heard him. I do not wonder at his influence over the ignorant masses; but he can scarcely be honest. All that he has said points to force at last, if all fails."

"Thank God, it does—thank God! Whether he knows it or not, who cares? I only know that he is rousing up again a spirit in the people which can only be quenched in blood."

"God, whose name you have taken, forgive you, Maurice. Do you think these poor, unarmed, helpless multitudes would have a chance against a nation which has its own army already planted in the land, strong enough alone to crush you—those to whom I belong, and whom I would join in case of need?"

"I don't doubt it," said Maurice, bitterly. "The

Bradys have long been on the side of the enemy. As to our power, we believe in a God of justice. Help will come at last, and we can wait."

The subscriptions kept pouring in. The lists were handed up to the Liberator, who read out the name and amount, with various comments.

"The next sum I have to announce," said he, "is twenty-seven pounds, eleven shillings, and sixpence, collected by that most patriotic priest and accomplished gentleman, my excellent and esteemed friend the Reverend—the Reverend" (the writing was bad, he could not make it out, and said, *sotto voce*—"What is the name, Ray?" coughing behind his hand at the time. "Father Pat Langan, Liberator," whispered Mr. Ray)—"The Reverend Patrick Langan," continued the Liberator. "Three cheers, boys, for Father Langan."

I was about leaving, when a loud cheer broke from the assemblage as the Liberator, who had been reading an address, suddenly exclaimed—

"I read that sentence, Mr. Chairman, that I may express my abhorrence of the sentiments of the writer. Colonel Wollop, of the United States militia, is no Irishman. (Cheers.) He has the audacity to advise the people of Ireland to take up arms and fight for their liberties, as the American

colonists did. Sir, I repudiate the expression of such sanguinary and unchristian doctrines in this hall. I beg to move, sir, that the secretary be instructed to return to Colonel Wollop, of Tomahawk City, Arkansas, his contribution of eight dollars, and to inform him that the people of Ireland intend to keep within the limits of the law, and to resort only to Christian and constitutional means for the redress of their grievances."

A voice at my elbow called out "Stuff!" and in a moment Maurice Prendergast was on his feet, and exclaimed—

"I wish, sir, to say a few words before that motion is put from the chair."

The great Agitator turned round, and was confronted by the calm and resolute look of the speaker.

"Do you move an amendment? You can't speak, except you support or oppose my motion."

"Yes, sir, I do. I rise to propose that the secretary be instructed to reply to Colonel Wollop, acknowledging his subscription, and expressing the regret of this association that the time has not yet arrived when the example of his countrymen can be followed with a prospect of success; whilst we pledge our faith to shrink from no danger and no sacrifice in the last resort to obtain the end for

which we are now only struggling by means within the law of England."

Immense cheers broke from part of the hall, mingled with cries of "Bravo! Young Ireland for ever!" The Liberator was used to such conflicts. Drawing himself up with an air of infinite scorn, he said—

"I object, Mr. Chairman, to your putting such a resolution from the chair. If this association, representing the people of Ireland, has confidence in me, I ask them now to show it, by rejecting with contumely the mischievous proposal of this man, who is, for all I know, a hireling of the Castle—(aye, sir, start and scowl as you please!)—and who would lead you to your ruin if he had as much wit as he has malignity and impudence."

Maurice's voice was drowned by shouts of "Sit down." O'Connell's motion was carried by a storm of voices, and Prendergast, amid a howl of angry epithets, hastily made his way from the hall. He was followed by ten or twelve young men, whose air and dress indicated that they belonged to a better class than most of the audience.

CHAPTER V.

A VISITOR AND A MYSTERY.

I WAS at breakfast one fine morning when a pounding at the outer door announced that some one was not willing to accept the evidence of its being closed as conclusive proof the occupant of the chambers was not at home. A hole bored in the wall of the bedroom "gave" out the landing, from which stray visitors could be reconnoitred without any suspicion of the surveillance; and Phineas was reporting to me therefrom such matters as struck him to be noteworthy.

"It's a tall hairy gintleman, with a mighty dark face and a hooked nose, that's pegging away," quoth Phinny Codd, my gyp, with his eye to the door-hole. "Bedad! he's got a good iday of knockin' at a dewer, anyway."

"I must see for myself, Phinny."

And, gathering up my dressing-gown, I went to

my bedroom, removed Mr. Codd from his coign of vantage, and surveyed the stranger, who, having knocked with a large cane up and down all the panels, and battered at the iron-plate of the lock, was writing on a card. I had never seen him in my life before. He was, as Phinny said, tall and dark, and hook-nosed, with very bushy eyebrows and a thick drooping moustache and beard, slightly grizzled. He was dressed in deep mourning, and had altogether an aspect which attracted attention. In these days all the world shaved except cavalry officers, and to them the beard was tabooed, so that such an appearance in College, not to say in Dublin, or in Ireland itself, was very unusual.

"I wonder what he wants, Phinny?"

"Bedad, sir, isn't it best to ax him, then?"

"Maybe it is a mistake. He may want my namesake, Sir Brady, the scholar, or perhaps he has come with a message from Sir Richard? He has a foreign air."

"He's took a penn'orth of paint off our dewer, anyway. Now he's going, anyway! He's putting his writin' into the dewer——"

I was already on my way to the door. The stranger looked up—he was down one flight of

stairs—as he returned he inquired, in a soft, shy voice—

"Am I fortunate enough to find Mr. Terence Brady in his chambers?"

"My name is Terence Brady, sir. I am sorry to have kept you so long waiting, but in fact I was scarcely prepared for visitors at this hour—I beg you to excuse the delay."

The stranger bowed, and removed his hat as he entered, exposing a bald head, on the top of which was a deep scar. He seated himself in my easy chair, and as he did so his wandering eye took in the whole appointments of the room, including Phinny Codd, who, in an intensely dirty apron, was making believe to remove the breakfast things. He paused for a moment, twirling a card in his fingers, and in a hesitating, undecided manner, began—

"I really must ask you, Mr. Brady, to accept my apologies for giving you so much trouble. The fact is, I have no reason for the visit except that I heard by chance you were here, and I thought I would call to see you."

This was not very lucid, so I bowed and said nothing.

"I suppose you are wondering who I am? I

quite forgot to say, Mr. Brady, I was an old friend of your father, and——"

"My dear sir! although I never remember seeing him, any friend of my father must be welcome to me. May I ask your name?"

"Yes, to be sure—I quite forgot that. When a fellow has had a sun-stroke his memory is apt to become a little queer. My name, however, is one I don't suppose you ever heard as that of a friend of your father's—Alan Fraser, eh?"

He handed me a crumpled card, which I unrolled, and read the words, "Colonel Charles Alan Fraser, Fraser's Horse, H.E.I.C.S." Beneath, in pencil, was "Morrison's Hotel—a friend of your father."

As I raised my eyes from the card, I met his fixed on me with great keenness.

"Yes, Colonel Fraser," I said, slowly, "I have heard of you before—at least if you are the same person as the Captain Fraser who was on board the *Ross-shire* Indiaman, when my mother was coming home to Europe."

"Ah, yes, poor lady. What a sad thing that was! But years, you know," he sighed, "years smooth away all our sorrows."

Colonel Fraser's glance was uneasy. It flitted

from me to the wall and to the floor, and back again incessantly.

"You knew my mother, Colonel Fraser, did you not?"

"Oh, intimately — that is to say, her father and I served in the same force. I remember her quite a little girl, before she was married to Jack Brady of the Queen's."

"Have you seen or heard of my mother lately?"

Colonel Fraser gave a nervous start in his chair.

"I? God bless me! How should I know where she is?" he exclaimed, with an agitated air.

"I ask you, sir, because I was told you were seen with her after her disappearance from the ship, and that you found her a home when she deserted me. Tell me, Colonel Fraser, is that true?"

"Well, Mr. Brady, it is hard to make me responsible for what you have been told." He paused for a moment, and then continued—"I will tell you really what occurred. Mrs. Brady was a fellow-passenger with me when the *Ross-shire* went on the rocks. We heard she was carried off the ship by a wave, and was drowned. You were then a little chap in the nurse's arms. We had a consultation as to what was best to be

done; and as your mother's friend, I took on myself to act. We sold off all the lady's things at Galle, and you were sent to your grandfather."

"But she was not drowned," I cried. "She was——"

"Let me continue my story, I pray," interrupted Colonel Fraser. "Some time ago it got into the papers that you were lost, and there was great grief about it."

"Grief!—who could grieve for me, Colonel Fraser?"

"All who knew your father," he answered. "Now excuse me," he continued, "if I revert to what you were saying. If I am not making too bold, as a friend of both Jack Brady and Mary Billing, I should like very much indeed to know what you heard as to your mother and myself. I may say I never approved of her course at the time, to begin with."

"Colonel Fraser, if you were indeed my father's friend, you will not be surprised should his son refuse to speak of the dishonour of his name—the disgrace of his wretched mother. I cherished her memory in my heart of hearts—I hoped for years that it might be my lot to penetrate the mystery which to my eyes was cast around her

fate. Colonel Fraser! I know all! I have seen it in her own hand, that she abandoned me cruelly and shamefully within a few weeks of my father's death. Would to God she had died a thousand deaths sooner than to see her live in sin and shame. And you look in my face and mock me with these questions?"

He rose and placed his brown hand on my shoulder.

"You needn't shrink from my touch. You spoke of your mother's sin and shame — you wrong her. I was an old admirer of your mother's long ere your father saw her. After Captain Brady's death, as luck would have it, I lost my poor wife, and I sailed on the first leave I had since I was a boy, in the ship in which your mother was a passenger. There is no use to dwell on what occurred. I swear to you it was not my doing, but I admit I never was so astonished, and, I will add, overjoyed—for I had had the strongest affection for Mary Billing—as when I was made aware that she had not forgotten me. It was my fate! I threw up my passage, my leave, everything!—I married her. She did not wish, for many reasons, to let it be known. She had hosts of horrid relations in India — half-castes,

and a whole brood of dreadful country-born Billings of the lowest sort. She concealed the marriage, and I yielded to her wishes. Now there is the fact, my dear sir! You wronged your mother and me. I know all your story. I have seen Mr. Bates already. I was anxious to see you—although your mother and I are no longer what we were."

There was a violent knocking at the inner door. Colonel Fraser took up his hat.

"Do let me see you," he said. "I shall expect you at seven o'clock to dinner at Morrison's. Do come, I beg of you. I have much to tell you."

I was agitated by a hundred conflicting emotions, I did not heed Bolton's cries through the keyhole, "Open the door, Brady! open the door quick!"

The Colonel had the handle in his hand. I exclaimed—

"Stay one moment. My mother, where is she? Shall I ever see her?"

The Colonel was brushing his hat with his coat sleeve. He looked at the nap and crape intently, and, without raising his eyes, replied—

"No!—I think not. I will tell you all when we meet—adieu!"

As Bolton charged in he started slightly, bowed,

and then with quick, firm step descended the staircase.

"I say, how the deuce do you know that dark fellow, Brady? They call him the Nabob at Morris's. How pale you are, old man!"

"And where is Morris's, and how do you know him, Dick, may I ask?"

"Morris's! Such a capital place! You just come and have supper some night, and try your luck. I was coming to tell you of mine, and, begad! when I saw the Nabob, I nearly shouted with fright. I thought he was the devil coming to fetch all back again, and me into the bargain."

"You have been up all night again, Dick! You will go to utter ruin, my lad."

"Nonsense. Come and look before you speak. Come along."

He dragged me across the passage into his room. The table was covered with the untouched breakfast, and with piles of bank-notes—some crisp and white, others pulpy and dirty.

"There—look! feel and believe!" exclaimed Bolton. "These are fives — these are tenners —these are small fellows. There's four hundred and six pounds on the table, my boy!"

"And did you win that at the gaming-table,

Dick?" I asked, reproachfully. "You promised you would not go there again."

"No more did I. Pat Considine took me there. Do you want a hundred? Do you want two—three—four? It's all yours if you like. Pay me when you please."

"Not one farthing to save my life, Dick. You say the dark fellow you met was at that place too?"

"Yes; I saw him there, more than once. He's not long from India, and has come over from London on a tour. He knows Lord Bighill and Finucane, and most of the bigwigs. He must have lost a tremendous lot."

"More than you have won?"

"I should think five times as much."

A footstep was heard on the stairs. Dick ran to the door. He turned pale as he held it ajar. Looking over his shoulder, I beheld the classical and elegant head-dress of one of the college porters.

"That's from the Dane, Misther Boulton. He's waitin' for you to come imageatly."

"Oh, Lord!—the Dean! Can't you tell him I'm sick in bed, Barrett?"

"I can if I'd like to tell a lie, an' be turned

off, Misther Boulton; an' besides, you'd have the Dane over at yer bedside in a jiffy."

"Was I reported, then?"

"Oh, ripported indeed! Small harm that 'ud be. There was some one at Morris's informed on you, I'm thinkin'. The Dane's stravagin' and ragin' most triminjous, and it's a dose of county air ye'll be getting, I'm afeerd."

"Well," quoth Dick, "give the Dean my compliments, and say—oh yes! say—I'll be over the instant I've done my Greek Iambics for my tutor. I'll have some money to make my sick-leave pleasant, at all events, my dear Brady, if the Dean really means mischief."

CHAPTER VI.

THE COLONEL'S REVELATIONS.

THE clock marked the course of the hours unheeded. This man, whom my mother had married ere my father had been more than a few weeks in his grave—a gambler, a spendthrift—what did he want of me? Why did he come to visit me? True, he had relieved me of an ever-present disgrace and misery. She had become this Fraser's wife. But how did he speak of her? Where was she now? Should I never see her—never upbraid her; never—oh, never—say that I forgave her all!

I went out at last to see Mr. Bates. He was not at home.

I was late for lecture. Sir Philip, as he whirled past me behind his pair of high-stepping greys, shook his forefinger menacingly in good-humoured rebuke for the first time. But punctual to the minute I was at Morrison's hotel.

"The Colonel's not in yet, sir; but dinner is ordered for seven, and he can't be long. The

young lady is in the drawing-room already. Pat, show this gentleman to No. 10."

What young lady? I thought. Colonel Fraser said nothing to me of any young lady.

A girl dressed in white was standing before the mirror opposite the door, arranging a rose in her hair. She turned round. I passed my hand over my eyes. Surely this must be noon-day madness!

"I must introduce myself, Mr. Brady," said a sweet little voice; "papa told me you were coming, and I expect him every moment. Meantime, let me make you known to his daughter, Mabel Fraser. We are almost kinsfolk, are we not?"

The very image of "the picture" was standing before me—the fair hair, the blue eyes, the curved lip, the snowy teeth, the pale, pure, white complexion. Colonel Fraser entered at the moment.

"Here is papa. You see Mr. Brady is here already. By the time you have dressed, papa, dinner will be very late."

We shook hands in silence.

"I am just going to ask your leave, Brady, and yours, Mabel, to dine in my frock coat. Ring the bell for dinner, Mabel. There is no one else."

He left the room for a moment.

I knew there was a cloud of white muslin somewhere in the room. I dared not raise my eyes; but I saw somehow the fair hair, the slight figure still, and that Mabel Fraser was looking at me from time to time as she turned over the leaves of a book.

The Colonel came back as dinner was announced.

"What an odd place this Dublin is! I could scarcely get along from the Castle just now, with a crowd cheering a big man in a broad-brimmed hat; and when I asked who it was, a fellow asked me in return "if I pretended I didn't know King Dan?" It was O'Connell and his following. What did you do while I was out, Mabel?"

"I had a drive with Mrs. Catly, papa. I was quite delighted with the buildings. And we met Captain Harcourt. He asked if he might call, and I referred him to you."

"Quite right, Mab. Brady, I fear you don't think much of Morrison's *cuisine?* But it's not bad; and I can promise you a curry, at all events, for my own cook will prepare it."

"Oh, papa, I forgot to tell you, old Mohun came up a while ago to say the curry powder's not very good, and to make a formal complaint of the people in the kitchen."

"Mohun! Is he here?" I exclaimed. "My old nurse!"

"I rather think not," answered Colonel Fraser; "Mohun is not an uncommon name in India. This is a fellow I have had with me a long time."

I could not eat; but I drank more wine than I was accustomed to do. If I looked up now and then, I was aware Mabel Fraser was enjoying her dinner. She had most probably set me down as a loutish, stupid, awkward lad, and only chatted with her father, who abandoned his attempts to make me speak. She appeared to be of the same age as I was—somewhat older, indeed, of the two. I could only think of the likeness. I was lost in conjectures, amid which floated now and then a suspicion of some unknown danger. Why had Colonel Fraser sought me? I longed to ask him a hundred questions. I desired to find out, as adroitly as I could, the truth concerning her of whom I could now speak without the burning shame which once flushed my cheek as her name came to my lips, but whom I was now not more willing to mention than before.

"And so you are going to be a surgeon, Mr. Bates tells me? Pray help my daughter to a glass of claret before she flies off to the next room and

leaves us to ourselves. I thought you would have followed your father's profession, and have entered the army?"

"And so indeed I would, had it been possible. But it was not considered prudent by Mr. Bates; and Sir Richard was of the same opinion."

"Sir Richard who? I didn't know you had any Sir Richard related to you."

"Sir Richard Desmond, of Kilmoyle." Colonel Fraser clinked his glass sharply. "He is not related—at least he is only some very remote connexion. The families were united by marriage long ago; but he was a friend of my grandfather's, and he is my other guardian."

I thought the dark face opposite to me was darkened for a moment, but the light in the room was indistinct.

"Sir Richard Desmond!" he repeated. "Is it possible he is your guardian? He is the elder brother of one of our great Indian people, Denis Desmond, who is now Lieutenant-Governor of Auripore—Mabel's *beau ideal* of an elderly hero and knight, only he will walk about in a pith helmet and white calico jacket. Eh, Mab? We have letters to Sir Richard, but unfortunately he is abroad, and I fear we have to go back to India without making his acquaintance."

"I heard to-day, sir, he and Miss Butler might be expected in Ireland. He is in very bad health."

"Miss Butler is his niece, is she not?" inquired Miss Fraser. "Mr. Desmond often speaks of her, though he can scarcely have ever seen her; but he tells us in India she is very pretty. Is she?"

"Pretty, Miss Fraser! Mary Butler is lovely beyond anything!—that is——"

I stopped short.

"That is you think so, and I am sure you are a good judge. It is a family gift," continued Colonel Fraser. "May I ask what she is like?"

"Oh! do—do describe her for me!" Miss Fraser put her tiny white hand on my arm and then drew it back again, so quickly, she could not have noticed the involuntary shrinking.

"I am a bad hand at such descriptions. I only am quite sure, if you could see her, you would agree with me;" and I was silent again.

"Mab! it is evident we can't induce Mr. Brady to make us his confidants; and, for my part, I like to see a young fellow begin life cautious even about such matters as his opinion of a girl's looks."

Miss Fraser smiled.

"I will take the hint," she said, and withdrew to the inner room, whence there issued presently a

pretty little voice, running on the top of the notes of a grumbling old hotel piano, as a petrel skims the sea.

The waiter came in to ask if lights were required.

"No. Don't come in till you are rung for—at least unless you would like candles, Mr. Brady."

And so we sat in the dark. The Colonel lit a cheroot and puffed away, but I could only see the glare of the end in the obscurity. The door opened again.

"Who is that? What the deuce do you come in for now?" exclaimed the colonel.

The answer was in an unknown tongue, but the tone seemed familiar to me. The Colonel gave some hasty reply; the door was closed.

"One of my black rascals!" said the Colonel; "some complaint about the servants or the kitchen, but I have sent him about his business. Will you have any more wine, or shall we go into the next room? For my own part, I would like to sit here a little longer."

Another pause. At last I burst out with it—

"Miss Fraser's most wonderfully like my mother, sir."

I could see several quick strong pulls at the

cheroot; the fire glowed, died out, and fired up again, ere he replied—

"It has struck many people. Mabel is my daughter by my first wife, and there was no connexion between the families. How do you know of the likeness?"

"I judge by the picture of my mother we have at Lough-na-Carra."

"Oh, that daub! I remember well when it was painted by an Italian vagabond at Lucknow. Like certainly, in a sort of way, but not at all with your mother's best expression. That was rare, and hard to catch."

"I would feel much obliged to you, Colonel Fraser," I gasped out, "if you would tell me something about the poor lady whom you tell me I have wronged so long. I would make amends, if I could, to her now, though she does not care for me."

"If you will take my advice you will let her rest! As you have never seen her, it is no harm to tell you that she has something not very pleasant in her nature, which has increased in force with years. 'Pon my oath! when I think of her at times I feel almost afraid.—Hallo! what's that?"

The door had opened, and a white figure could

be seen standing in the doorway by the light outside. The Colonel's voice caused me to start. I heard a briefer dialogue in the same tones as before, and the door closed again.

"As I was saying when Mohun came in, I am almost afraid no one could ever understand the wonderful natural gifts of your mother. It was all head-work with her lately, no heart at all—for ordinary matters, at least."

He paused for a moment; I heard his glass filled up.

"If I told you now she was dead," he went on, "I should not be surprised to observe it made no impression on you, for I know how you have been brought up, and the stories they have told you."

I was in violent agitation. I cried out—

"Oh, sir! she is alive, I know! But where is she?"

"Thousands of miles away! It was only my influence long ago prevented her coming over here to claim you and all the rest of her natural property, as she terms it. A wonderful will!—a woman in a thousand of thousands!"

"Colonel Fraser! I don't understand you. Just now you said you did not think it would surprise me to hear my mother was dead. Although she has

never acted as a mother towards me, I have tried to steel my heart against her, but in vain! Surely you have not asked me here to try my temper and my feelings—at least, if you have, I know how to terminate the trial."

I was rising from my seat when Colonel Fraser said—

"I have no wish to try your temper or your patience; as an old friend of your father's, I have no wish except for your good. There are more ties to bind us together than you think. You know that I married your mother—that may be no claim to your goodwill or respect till you are acquainted with all the circumstances. But there are, for good or for evil, influences which bring you and me together——"

He paused and said no more.

"I am anxious to hear, but you will not speak. God knows I shall be very grateful for anything which raises me up a friend!"

"You are probably not aware that the Desmonds and I are connected, are you?"

"Not in the least, sir. I have only heard your name in connexion with that dreadful event which lost me a mother, and left me an orphan, and I little expected ever to know you then."

"To be an orphan at eighteen is not so very bad, after all. The bird ought to be fledged, if ever he is to take flight, then; and to lose a mother, or go without one, is not always so very dreadful. But, as I was saying, my first wife was a cousin of these Desmonds; and, indeed, it is whispered that the Denis of whom we have been speaking was mighty fond of her. He certainly is of Mabel there; and but for some little differences which ought never to have parted such old friends, Mab might be his heiress, as he said she should be long ago. However, his great pet now is this pretty Mary Butler, whom you are so devoted to."

"Devoted, sir? I really don't understand you."

"Nor yourself. However, I don't wish to pry into your secrets. I will tell you mine. I might have well said your mother was dead; for she is so to me. I have every reason to believe she is alive and well. Our tastes and our tempers differed. Only one thing we agreed upon, which was, that we could not be happy together. I was stationed at a native court where there was no society—Europeans did not vex us with their tattle; so she left me without the *éclat* and scandal which make separation so exciting and attractive over here. I shall ever feel

the liveliest regard for her; and if at any time you wish to hear of her, or to communicate with her, I can manage to gratify you, though I cannot give her address to any one without her consent—that's part of our compact. Shall we go in? I have an appointment this evening and must leave presently, if you will excuse me."

And he walked away to the lighted room where his daughter was seated at the tea-table.

CHAPTER VII.

AN ORGIE AND ITS ENDING.

I WALKED back sadly to College. The Indian story had changed in its form and aspect, but was scarcely less terrible to me. I had sat face to face with Mabel Fraser, and stared at her in silence till her eyes dropped, and a faint blush rose to her cheek. Her pretty graceful figure seemed still to stand before me as I entered my gloomy chamber. I heard her words as we parted—

"Be sure you call soon; we must become good friends. I almost feel inclined to call you Terry on the strength of these mighty Desmonds. I can't help the likeness, you know, but if I could I would, believe me. Good night, Mr. Brady."

As I lighted my lamp I perceived a letter on my table. I opened it and read—

"MY DEAR TERENCE,—Come over to me this evening to supper, if you have no better engage-

ment, and show you can forgive my rudeness. There will be a small party, conversation, and a couple of agreeable strangers.

"Yours ever,

"M. PRENDERGAST."

It was not yet ten o'clock. I felt excited by wine, and the excuse for postponing "Harrison's Anatomy" and my volume of Stock's "Demosthenes," left open at the middle of the "περὶ στεφανου" was not to be resisted. I called to a passing jarvey, outside the college gates, and directed him to a suburb then rather frequented by students —a long straggling village on the sea-shore, near Clontarf, where Brian Boiroihme really did defeat the Danes, and gave something of a national character to one act in Irish history.

"No. 16, Charlemont-terrace," said I, "as quick as you can."

The driver leant over as he repeated the address, and said in a whisper, "It's a fine night?"

There was something in his familiar, and yet inquisitive tone, which annoyed me. There were mutterings of distant thunder in the distance, and I said, rather sharply,

"It's nothing of the kind—just mind your driving, and get on before the storm comes."

"It's No. 16?" persisted the fellow. "Shure that's where Mr. Prendergast lives?—one of the Sword-boys; and I thought you might be one of them. It's a fine night. Harrup, Kate! Cess! cess! cess!"

"What are the Sword-boys, as you call them?"

"Oh! sorra one of me knows, your honour! They live at Swords most of them, I believe, and that's the way the name came on them."

The Terrace was nothing very grand in terraces—a row of small houses, with gardens in front, facing a high wall, the boundary of a demesne. No. 16 was distinguished by lights glaring from the windows, and by cars before the door; all the rest was lifeless, as a Dublin suburb usually is at night.

A pile of hats in the hall — a cloud of tobacco in the passage—a strong smell of whisky and lemons—through the chink of the doorway a man visible laying supper on a long table—a maid vanishing up stairs with jugs of hot water—a good deal of noise and clatter of tongues. I had been in the house before, but had never assisted at

such a noisy *réunion* as Maurice appeared to have assembled to-night.

"They code not stan' before our a'mighty fitin' boys, not nohow, sir. Talk ev yer Bonayparts, or yer Cæsars, or that degenerate Arther Wellington! Creation! I tell yer, gentlemen—and yeu may believe me as safe as I am Colonel Cornelius Slattery — there never wair and never wall be a greater fitin' giniral than Giniral Scott? No whar on the airth can you find troops to withstand the impetewous nater of the chyldren ev the Stars and Stripes!"

The speaker was a lean little man, with a cadaverous aspect. His face betokened a Milesian origin, which was further betrayed by the intonation of his speech. He held a glass in one hand and a pipe in the other, with which he described circles in the air, in illustration of some argument addressed to a group of young men at the end of the table.

"But, Colonel Slattery, that may be all true," rattled out Bolton, "and yet it does not prove you are not as great tyrants as any in the world. Why do you set on those poor devils of Mexicans, and call on us to applaud you, whilst you condemn European nations for similar acts?"

"Ev yew will jist onderstand the trew principils ev our institutions, ye'll see, Mester Bolton, that it's for the good of the human race for us to whip the Mexicans. We were bound to do it, sir, in the interest ev civilization"—(a wave of the pipe)—"ev hewmanity"—(another wave)—"ev—ev, as I might add, ev Congress—and ev them poor cusses of Mexicans themselves."

"But that is the very thing, I say. By giving your motives fine names you don't disguise the facts. You have been inveighing against the English government and people here, and against all the governments of Europe for tyranny and oppression, and yet you have exterminated the Indians from their lands, and have made war against every nation you could reach."

"What do you mean by reach? I guess, sir, Paul Jones, and Decatur, and McDonough reached perty far. We mean to try if we can't reach further some day——"

"There's no doubt of it," interrupted Bolton. "You could only get at the Mexicans, and you bullied them. I think your eagle is just a degenerate type of the European birds which afflict humanity on this side of the Atlantic, as your puma is an American edition of the lion of the Old World.

"Sir," exclaimed Colonel Slattery, breaking his pipe in emphasis on the table, "these air expressions which entoirely deprives——"

At this moment Maurice Prendergast interrupted the Colonel's speech to present him to me and a new comer—a sleek, fat man of very dark complexion. The Colonel bowed and shook me by the hand with effusion; but his face darkened as he marked the hue of the oily little stranger, and he put his hands behind his back in a resolute attitude.

"No, Mr. Prendergast, sir!—not if you please; Colonel Slattery's hand is not given to a nigger—not if he was lord mayor of London."

"I assure you, Colonel Slattery, this is a most distinguished Indian gentleman—a lover of freedom—a citizen of the world—Prince Rustum Sing—one of the oldest families of Hindostan. I hope you will recall your words."

At the word "Prince," Colonel Slattery removed both hands with a jerk, and seizing the fingers of the little man, whose anger could scarcely be concealed beneath his smiles and bows, said, as he wrung them—"Prince Rustum, I'm glad to know yew! I love them as loves liberty and fer-reedum, all over the airth; and I respect princes who act as such. I'm a gentleman and a Colonel myself, and if

ever yew come to my country, Prince, I'll be glad to introduce yew to our President and senators."

The Colonel's civilities were terminated by a summons to supper. The "Prince," who seemed very ill at ease, sat next Maurice, the Colonel at the other side, and I down at the end of the table among some college men, whom I recognised as the ultras of a debating society outside the College walls, which I had once attended in company with Maurice. The storm raged outside. It was one of those evenings when a morose and quarrelsome mood seems to be in the air, and wine turns hot in the head and fiery in the heart. Our host drank deeply; and he, Bolton, and the American Colonel were soon engaged in warm discussion. At my end of the table the conversation, if it could be called so, referred to political matters, in which I was little interested.

"Who are these odd people Prendergast has got here to-night?" I inquired of my neighbour, who happened to be a quiet-looking young fellow I had seen with a sizar's gown at chapel.

"They're pathriots of various counthries, atthracted here by our sthruggle for freedom. They've come to study the Repale movement. But they only see the beginning of what is about to be——"

"Shannavan's song—Shannavan's song!" burst out a chorus of voices. My friend cleared his throat and sang. A sweet, sonorous voice rolled out the burning verses of poetical deification of "the men of '98." The chorus was taken up by every voice but mine, and Bolton's song followed. The Prince had to be sent away to his hotel—the Colonel could only blink his eyes fiercely at the nearest candle and utter war-whoops at intervals. At last, a young man got up unsteadily, and, with thickened utterance, proposed "The glorious memory of Irish Rebellion."

I rose and exclaimed—

"I will not sit here to listen to treason;" and, amidst a storm of yells and groans, walked into the hall, and was about leaving, when Maurice came out with face flushed.

"You have called my friends traitors, Terence Brady. I consider that an honourable name; but by it you intended to insult them in my own house. I shall hold you responsible."

"Wherever and whenever you like. It is I whom you have insulted by asking me to meet such people; and I shall hold you responsible for the affront they have put on me."

A flash of lightning, as he stood in the door-

way, showed the angry frown on Maurice's brow; the thunder crashed outside. I rushed out into the night; the rain fell, but I heeded it not, as I strode down the narrow lane. Under the trees, by the wall, I perceived three men, who appeared to be seeking refuge from the storm.

"It's a fine night," said one, as I passed.

I took no notice, and walked on; footsteps plashed after me on the sloppy road. It was in no fear that I ran. I was young, fleet of foot, and active, and it suited my humour to try my speed.

"Stop!" shouted a voice behind me; "we want to speak to you."

I held my peace, pressed my hat on my brows, bounded along the path, turned by the sea-wall, and at full speed started towards Dublin. Through the tumult of the rain and storm I heard the heavy breathing of my pursuers, and the tramping of their feet. I increased my speed, shortened my stick in my grasp. In a few minutes I looked over my shoulder. There was a good runner among them; two of the men had fallen out of sight in the darkness, but one kept steadily along, and was only some forty or fifty yards behind me.

What were they—robbers? It was not probable; they would scarcely attack a man within a few

yards of a house full of people, which he could have reached in a moment had he turned the other way at first. "It is a fine night!" Could that be some watchword? At any rate, my fine fellow, you will have to put on more steam to catch me, I promise you.

Through the rain and blinding lightning the chase continued. We were nearing the bridge. At that hour, and in such a night, not a soul was abroad. Half a mile further lay the streets of the city. I felt half angry for having run at all; but the trial of speed once begun I resolved to go on with it. I put on a spurt, and gained the end of a lonesome street. The lamp-light on the pavement made it shine like glass far a-head, and no shadow moved on its surface. Just crossing the bridge behind me came my pursuer. Suddenly there stepped a figure swiftly from the recess of a doorway, and barred my path. What possessed me I knew and cared not. I dashed his arm aside, and sped on, though my heart was beating, and my breath came short and thick. The policeman's heavy boots clattered along in the chase. Turning down another street, I perceived a car standing before the door of one of the gambling-houses which then infested Dublin. The

driver stood under cover of the doorway. I leaped up on the car—

"To the College—quick as you can!" I shouted.

"I can't, yer honner! I'm engaged by a gintleman inside."

"It's a fine night! He can walk."

The man's manner changed at once.

"The day will be finer!" he said, with a significant gesture, leaped on his seat, and with a cut of the whip started the sleeping horse on its journey.

Just as he did so the door opened, and I saw by the light of the lamp a man emerge whose figure was that of Fraser.

"There's the gintleman!" said Pat. "It's five shillings yer honner would have to give me if I charged you the fare I've lost; but you're one of the raal sort, and sorra a policeman shall touch you this night, any way."

Away through the rain and muddy streets—a faint rattle sounded in the distance as we turned the corner.

"Rattle till ye break yer elbow, my lad! Hurroo!"

The lamps flew past us; in a few minutes the man drew up his panting horse outside the College gate, with "A long life to yer honner!"

I thundered at the door. The porter, as he took down my name, stared at my drenched and muddy clothes and flushed face.

"I have had a row, M'Cormack. If any one asks for my name presently, don't give it up."

There was one way of securing M'Cormack's fidelity.

"Is it the polis?" he asked, as he looked at the coin.

"I don't know—may be it is."

"All right, sir."

A significant grin assured me M'Cormack, as he retired to his den behind the gate, believed me deeply implicated in hostilities with the new constabulary.

I was soon asleep, but a wild dream of assassins and conspirators, in which Fraser, my mother, and Maurice, were strangely mixed up, vexed my slumbers, though I did not wake till it was late in the morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

A NIGHT'S WORK.

"THERE'S a nate job in 'Saunders' this morning," observed Phinny Codd, as he laid the breakfast; "a jintleman bate to death, and a polisman kilt."

"Where, Phinny?"

"Ah, thin, quite convaynient—nigh Summer Hill, no less. An iligant time the blackguards had for it. You must have been out in the thick of the storm, too; and I'm doubtin' if them new dhress throwsers 'l ever be made dacent, the way they were left in this blessid day."

I took up the paper, and read—

"APPALLING OUTRAGE. — At two o'clock this morning, as Sergeant Whack was proceeding on his rounds, he discovered the lifeless body of a gentleman on the pavement, near a notorious house in Burnett Street. He was bleeding from a wound in the side of the head from a stick or large stone,

and, on summoning assistance, the sergeant, going a short way up the same street, was horrified to find Constable Doody, on whose beat it was, lying insensible from a terrible injury in the head also. With the aid of the police, who were called to the scene, the stranger and the constable were conveyed to the station, where the surgeon dressed their wounds. The unfortunate gentleman is, it has been ascertained, an officer of rank and distinction in the East India Company's Service, named Fraser, at present on a visit to our city, and residing with his daughter at Morrison's Hotel, whither he has been conveyed in a litter. He had a large sum of money on his person, which is untouched. Both he and the constable are in a precarious state, and at this very hour not the slightest cue has been found or suggested to account for this appalling crime in our peaceable and quiet community."

What horrible tale was this? It was frightful to think that I had been close to the scene of such a tragedy! Merciful Heaven! if suspicion should fall upon me! I was running as if in flight—the carman—the porter! It was too terrible to let my mind dwell on the picture. In a few minutes and I was at the hotel. Sir Philip was just coming down the stairs.

"How is the Colonel, sir?"

"It is a severe blow. A slight concussion of the brain, I fear; but there is no fracture. How do you know Colonel Fraser?"

"Why, sir, I dined with him last night, and left him to go to a supper at Clontarf. Colonel Fraser was a friend of my father, and after my father's death married my mother, and that is how he came to call on me."

"I never heard of the marriage before," said Sir Philip. "At all events, you cannot see him now. I have stayed the poor young lady's tears—a pretty sensitive creature. There is really no absolute danger—none. He is sensible, and I hope to find him better when I return. Lecture at three o'clock, remember."

And he drove off as I turned from the door. The best thing I could do was to go to Mr. Bates. He was busy with his papers, and did not perceive my pale and agitated face.

"Well, Terry, what news? How goes on the work? Dissect! dissect! dissect! Well, it's better to have such a task than to spend your life hunting out the secret meanness, fraud, and wickedness of mankind."

He stared with open eyes as I told him what had occurred.

"My God! how glad I am you came to me! Why, they might get up a most damning case against you! Come off with me at once. We must see the police magistrate immediately."

Mr. Blood, the terror of pugnacious coal-porters and disorderly collegians, was in his private room taking all evidence that could be afforded by the police concerning the outrage. There was little to take, except what the sergeant and the constables who came up after the alarm was given, could tender; and when Mr. Bates introduced me as a witness who might throw some light on the affair, the magistrate assumed an attitude of marked attention. I told my story to the end. Mr. Blood looked at me in silence.

"This is a strange account you give, Mr. Brady," he said, after a time. "Would you know the car-boy again?"

"Certainly."

"Where were you supping?"

"At Mr. Maurice Prendergast's, 16, Charlemont Terrace."

"And when did you leave? Were there any of the company behind you?"

"About a quarter-past one o'clock, or somewhat later, I should think. I was one of the first to leave."

"You say there were three men as if hiding under the demesne wall when you passed, and when they said, 'Stop!' you ran on? Why did you not run back towards the house if you thought they intended robbery and violence?"

"I can scarcely say. I had not parted with my host on very good terms, and without knowing why, I resolved to give the fellows a run."

"Without knowing who they were? They might have been a police patrol, eh?"

"As I have said, I can't tell why I ran, but I did so. I distanced all but one, and he was a steady, strong runner. I could see he had something in his hand."

"Were you armed in any way?"

"I had only a thick stick—a blackthorn; here it is. I don't usually carry it, but as I intended to walk home that night, I took it out in my hand."

"And you dined with the unfortunate gentleman who is the victim of this outrage?"

"I did."

"Did you agree to meet him at any place later in the evening?"

"No; I did not."

"Why did you not stop to take him up when you saw him coming out of the house in the rain?"

"I can scarcely say. I deeply regret it. I had taken his car, and there was some unaccountable impulse upon me."

"The policeman who tried to stop you came, you say, out of the doorway of a house near the bridge: where was the man then? And why did you not stop when you saw it was a constable? You would have then been quite secure against violence."

"I had no fear of violence—it never entered into my head; and just as I started off at first from the other fellows, I, as I suppose, from bravado, and having taken too much wine, ran from the police."

"You heard the constable running. Can you say what the man did who had been after you?"

"No, sir."

"Serjeant Whack, can you tell me how far from the bridge constable Doody was found?"

"It was full six hundred yards, or perhaps more, your worship. At half-past one o'clock constable Doody would have been just about the end of the bridge to meet the man on duty by the canal."

"And how far was he lying from Colonel Fraser?"

"About a hundred yards, your worship."

"It is a most singular story," said Mr. Blood

after a pause. "We will swear you to your information, and I will take Mr. Bates's word for your appearance. It is quite evident that, however innocently, you have caused, or rather you might have prevented, a shocking crime. There can be no doubt that man, or he and his comrades, committed these most murderous assaults; but their motive is beyond our reach at present. How is the constable going on, Serjeant Whack?"

"Dr. Tuson says he fears there's frackter of the skull; but he's sensible now, your worship."

"You have not a trace of these men?"

"Not one, your worship—not the smallest."

"Well, you must leave no stone unturned. Look out for the carman, and let him and the college porter be here at the next examination, which will take place as soon as anything turns up. I shall go to the Castle, Bates, and advise the Government to issue a large reward. Mr. Brady will do all he can to assist the police by identifying the carman and the man or men whom he saw hiding. It is strange why they pursued him so pertinaciously, and why he ran on when all danger was over. It is altogether a most curious case, Bates, most curious! Only for your ward's respectability I must say there would be some suspicions attach-

ing to him. Oh, don't start, sir; I don't mean of the gravest kind, but of a nature to authorize me to hold you in heavy bail."

We took our leave and walked towards the college.

"Is it not very odd that this Colonel Fraser should be so set upon?" said my guardian. "If his money had been taken, we might have fixed on some of the ruffians in the gambling-house he had left."

"Might not the policeman have disturbed them, sir?"

"I thought of that, but you see his money was safe, and the policeman was rendered insensible. I can't make it out. Let us hope for the best. They will both recover, please God! and we shall find the villains at last."

As I entered the gate the porter on duty told me Mr. Bolton had been inquiring for me, and that the gyp had let him into my room, where he was waiting for me. "He didn't like being seen in the court—small blame to him!"

Dick Bolton was waiting for me indeed; his face swollen and flushed, over one blackened eye a recent cut, covered with black plaster; his hair uncombed, his clothes muddy and torn.

"Look at this, Terence!" he exclaimed, pointing to his eye. "See what a ruffian blow Maurice Prendergast gave me after you left. Will you be my friend? I must have satisfaction, and nothing but one thing can wipe away that blood!"

In broken, agitated accents he told me how the carouse had gone on after I had left, and how Maurice, deep in his cups, had branded him and me as "unworthy Irishmen"—or some such phrase—he couldn't remember what—but at all events, angry words were spoken. Bolton at last was struck by Maurice, and was taken off furious and struggling by the more sober students who stopped the conflict.

No time must be lost—no apologies would do. He was furious, and burst into tears in his rage. I told him that Prendergast and I had had words, and that it would scarcely be proper in me to take a message, as I had an affair of my own on hand.

"The very reason!—you can meet him afterwards; he can't refuse me first. Terence, this blow will drive me mad!"

There was a knocking at the inner door, and to my astonishment Colonel Slattery walked in, passing Phinny Codd with a wave of authority, as he sought to arrest his progress. His beard was trimmed into

the form of a thick wedge, pendent from his chin and throat; his cheeks clean shaven, so that the exact position of the piece of tobacco in his jaw could be traced as the Colonel champed it as a boa crunches a rabbit. A large diamond glittered in his shirt-front; a black satin waistcoat, black coat, and black dress trousers; a white tie and gloves, and patent leather boots, gave him the appearance of a waiter *en grande tenue*, or of an undertaker's man on a holiday.

"I hev come on the part ev my friend, Mr. Prendergast, to deliver this cart-ell, and to await your reply. Your servant, Mister Bolton. That's a perty bad woound over the eye, yev got. Hev yew tried an iced dollar on it? In my practice I've found it a perty certain thing."

The note ran thus:—

"My dear Brady,—I have been thinking over what occurred last night, and hope you will accept the assurance of my very sincere regret for any offence I may have offered you in a moment of excitement. Of course, after I have said so much, it remains for you to decide whether an old acquaintance, which on my side has long been friendship, should cease or not. I do not mind

confessing to you that I was not in my right mind last night. Our company was badly sorted; and I have had a serious quarrel with Bolton, in which I believe I was very wrong, though I cannot make that admission to him. In fact, you are the only man in college whom I would care to propitiate. I will even apologize to you formally, if you like. I had to take your words on my back after you left, I think; and it was only by asking others I learned they did not know what passed at the door.

"Yours truly,

"M. P."

"I will answer this letter myself, Colonel Slattery. I wish you a good morning."

The Colonel did not seem inclined to go.

"Ef I might suggest to Mister Bolton that he should get his eye in order for any difficulty that might arise? an iced dollar now"—

"Colonel Slattery," I interrupted, "we are both much occupied at present. I shall not trouble you to wait for any reply to Mr. Prendergast's letter, but will send it by my servant. Good morning, sir."

I stood at the door, while the Colonel sidled out awkwardly and with some remark about "an iced dollar's the thing whar thar's inflimmation," took his departure.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DUEL.

In the days when I was at College duels were rare, but the traditions of the art and practice, nourished occasionally by accounts of secret encounters between angry rivals or political opponents on "The Bull" or in the Phœnix, still lived. Now and then indeed an orthodox, substantial affair of honour occurred beyond all doubt, but dead shots had become very scarce; and when, after a period of seclusion from society, Captain O'Daisy came out on the world with a limp and a stick, or Tom French was seen with his arm in a sling, it was considered generally that a step had been made back to the good old times, though no one would like to swear that O'Daisy had not sold the race for which he got horsewhipped, or that Tom French had behaved well to the young lady whose brother had winged him. On the whole, it was thought

rather a fine thing to have been "out," and certainly no one dared to refuse a request for a pistol promenade on the turf if he desired to stand well with his friends.

"The air is becoming very thick about you, Master Terence," said I to myself, as I set out on my errand. "Here is a new phase in that history of one whom in life or death, honour or dishonour, you cannot shake off—this Fraser turns up, and in some inscrutable way you become almost an actor in the horrors of that night. You have an affair of police on hand—you are engaged in a duel—promoting the death of one or other of your friends —that will be another police business! Then will come expulsion from College. What a plague you are to all around you! You cannot take a cruise to sea but you involve every one in trouble and distress;—at school you are never out of scrapes! As you grow older you seem to get worse. You are now on a wicked errand, if you carry it out;—what would Mary Butler say?"

(Here I felt a little lump rise in my throat, and paused to consider the question.)

"Why, of course, she would say 'Terence couldn't refuse his friend!' Would she, though?—particularly if she knew how the quarrel arose. What

shall I do? Tell Mr. Bates? No. He was out with old Tandy, the proctor, long ago, and they often celebrate the event over their claret; but now he would inform the police, raise the College, and get me into discredit. Hang Dick Bolton!—why did he select me? He has lots of friends who would be delighted!"

And so I pondered, arguing against every step I took—but taking it still—and moving on "because I could not help it;"—and if I could not, who could?

"And so you have come to ask me," said Maurice Prendergast, "to give Dick Bolton a meeting? You know," he added with a bitter smile, "this is very informal. But I will not stand on ceremony. I am really sorry for what has happened, but I can't say so, and now he wants me to try and shoot him by way of satisfaction, or to let him shoot me for the wrong I have done to him. I have behaved like a savage, but I can't do anything but fight. If by moving a hair's-breadth right or left I could avoid this quarrel now, I would not stir, because I dare not. I must give him his satisfaction, and you have only to arrange with Considine when and where it's to be."

Mr. Pat Considine was older than any of us, and on the reputation acquired by two years' service in a regiment of Austrian cuirassiers—ere for some inscrutable purpose he entered College—was much resorted to for advice in delicate matters by the young men of his party. He was greatly admired for a way he had of clanking the heels of his boots together when he made a bow, and was distinguished by saluting casual acquaintances in a way which made their blood boil owing to its intense civility.

Mr. Considine was unusually bland and courteous as I explained my errand.

"I've had an idaya of this already; and as there could be only one way to settle it, I've made arrangements to shoot your convayniance. The Phaynix is dangerous, and them cockle garls are prowlin' about the Boll at all hours, and might disturb us. Whawt do you say to go-an' to the back of Kilbarrack churchyard? My man and I could shlip out of his lodgin's and shtroll out there at foive o'clock, widout any one bein' the wiser; and yer frind and yerself cud shleep at a hotel, and get up airly be way of takin' the mail to some place. There's no need of a surgin, I suppose; but if you like, our mewtewal frind Ringbone cud be talked to. What do ye say?"

I said, with obsequiousness, it would be best to have Ringbone in attendance.

"Ye'r right. It's kew-rious how bul'ts will go sthravagin' and hittin' fellows sometimes. An' ye'll bring yer own pishtels. Good mornin' to ye, Mr. Brady. At foive! Kilbarrack church."

Was it all a dream? No. There is Pat Considine clanking his heels at the outer door. How red and pale I got as I met my tutor in the square, and had to tell him all about my escape from the ruffians who had assaulted Colonel Fraser and the policeman!

"I am not astonished at your trepidation even now, as you recal these singular events," quoth my tutor. "You ought to be very thankful—very, indeed. No doubt the perpetrators will be rendered amenable to justice. See what late hours and dangerous companions expose one to, and shun them in future. Good morning."

What are you engaged in now, Terence Brady?

One word to that tall, unconscious, sympathetic old gentleman might alter your destiny and change the current of your friend's life! Out with it!—speak! I could not because I would not.

Bolton opened the door for me. I found on his table what Mr. Considine had called "a felewt

case," and two of the longest-barrelled pistols I had ever seen.

"I have been home to get them," he said, "and had to tell such an awful lie to my mother as an excuse for getting the key of my father's study. They were her brother's, and the nick you see on the stock of that one was put when he shot Mr. Fellowes. I will take care there shall be no second nick if I can help it. You cannot imagine how miserable my poor uncle was at the end of his days for shooting that man. He used to howl like a maniac at nights, and had a look in his eyes sometimes that was frightful."

Poor Dick gave a small shiver as he spoke. He listened to my account of the arrangements for the meeting.

"It is only right," he said, "to prepare for anything that may arise. I have been a very bad fellow. If I go down, my dear old *mater* will have one great grief to swallow up all the small sorrows I have caused her. Terence, I shall just shut myself up—not to commune with my own heart, as they say, but to write a few words and set this ragged cabin of mine in order—And so good-bye till seven o'clock—at Lacken's."

There was a sense of importance about me as I

laid aside my cap and gown and walked through the College gates, on my way to Morrison's Hotel. I wonder do great criminals, as they brood over some deed of horror, and feel it assuming definite purpose and shape within them, experience an exultation at the thought that they are about to step out of obscurity and become marked among men? I know, as I looked in people's faces, I heard a voice within saying, "How little they know what you are going to do! How they would turn and stare at you if they were aware you were going to be a second in a duel to-morrow!

There was a crowd round Morrison's door, and as I approached I saw Rustum "the Indian Prince" sitting inside an old postchaise loaded with luggage. He turned his head when he caught my eye. Why, I could not tell, nor did I care to inquire, for I was by no means proud of his acquaintance.

Colonel Fraser is so much better, the porter told me, "that he has been able to see the Indian Prince that's leaving us, thank God." "Miss Fraser left word if you called you were on no account to go away without sending up your name."

A "hurroo!" from the crowd, as the carriage, followed by a car, crowded with native servants,

drove off from the door, drowned my excuses, and the porter ran upstairs to announce me ere I could say I must go away.

"Step up, sir, if you please," called the waiter over the banisters. "Miss Fraser will be glad to see you."

"Very glad indeed," repeated the soft voice. "Papa, thank God, is so much better. His poor head still aches, and he has noises in it, and lights flashing in his eyes; but the doctors say he has recovered wonderfully, and in a few days he will be himself again. He has asked after you several times—I must tell him you are here."

She was going towards the door, when I exclaimed—

"No; I beg of you. Not now, I entreat, Miss Fraser. It would be better not—better for both of us. Wait till to-morrow. I could not bear to see him now."

"Oh! he is not so dreadful to look at, Mr. Brady. I'm sure, if you knew how anxious he is to see you, there would be no objection on your part."

"But, indeed, I would rather not. It would agitate him perhaps. Let me speak to you first, I implore you."

Mabel Fraser looked at me wonderingly; closed the door, and, walking to the chair where I was seated, took my hand, and gazing into my face with her clear soft eyes, said slowly—

"I am sure there is nothing you can have to say to me I ought not to hear. So I will just sit and listen obediently as you tell me. Well?"

There was a pause—an awkward one.

"Well?" she repeated. "I have done as you bid me, and am all attention."

"Miss Fraser," I gasped out, "I would not like to see your father just yet. After I dined with you things happened—I——"

"Ah!" she murmured, "such a dreadful night! —The storm kept me awake, and when my father was brought in—oh! such a sight!—my senses nearly left me. But heaven be praised it is no worse! Poor papa! Mr. Brady, he is the noblest creature on earth. I love him better than all the world beside."

Miss Fraser put her handkerchief to her eyes and turned aside her head.

"Do you know," I asked, "where Colonel Fraser was going when he left us?"

"He went out to an evening party, and I was too tired to accompany him. Oh! had I known, would

I not have made any sacrifice to have been by his side? He deserves it. Every thought of his heart is for me. We were long separated; for papa at one time was very unhappy. He was very foolish too; but ever since I went out to India to him, except one cloud, which passed away very soon, I have been happy—oh! how happy!—with him always."

"And that cloud was——"

"A cloud, and nothing more. It is gone, and with it the shadows it cast over us. But it is I who am speaking, and you who are the listener! Let us reverse the parts, please."

"Then let me speak. After I left you I saw your father."

Mabel Fraser turned her head and scanned my face with a quick steady look—

"Saw my father? Well? At Mrs. Latouche's ball?"

"No. Not at Mrs. Latouche's. I was leaving the house of a college acquaintance after midnight, when suddenly three men sprang out and pursued me. We had a long race. One alone kept up with me. A policeman sought to stop me, but I slipped past him, and presently I came to a car waiting outside a house. I leaped on it, and as I did so

the door opened, and Colonel Fraser, I am almost sure, came out of the house. For some reason I cannot explain even to myself, I drove away and left him. We heard the policeman spring his rattle, and nothing more. I got to College, and in the morning heard of the outrage."

"Then had you not taken the car papa would have escaped?" exclaimed Miss Fraser. "What an unfortunate circumstance for us all, Mr. Brady!"

"You do not ask me, Miss Fraser, where this took place?"

"Well really, Mr. Brady, it is a point which is not of the smallest consequence to me. I do not know one street in Dublin from the other. But Colonel Fraser," she added, coldly, "has several acquaintances here, and it is not my habit to ask him where he visits. I believe when he dressed and went out he was going to one or two different places."

The Nabob does not make his daughter his confidante, or she keeps her counsel well. There was a pause for a few seconds.

"I met the Indian prince, whom I perceived just now driving away from the door, the same evening."

"An Indian prince!" she repeated. "And who was that, Mr. Brady?"

"Rustum Sing, a friend of Colonel Fraser's."

"Rustum Sing!—a prince," she exclaimed, with a scornful laugh. "Why he was once one of our servants—a khitmutgar, or butler, and had no idea of being a Sing or a Lion of any kind. He became contractor for the army, and has come over about a claim against the Government. Hearing papa was here, he followed him from England, to get evidence for his great lawsuit. Rustum a prince! that is really very funny."

"He was carrying off some of your father's portmanteaux. I saw several marked, 'Major A. C. Fraser,' on the roof of his carriage."

"Probably old ones we gave him, or which he stole when he was in our service," observed Miss Fraser. "But there is papa's bell. Do let me tell him you are here." And she went out of the room in her quiet noiseless way. She returned in a few moments.

"My father is inclined to sleep," she said; "I have not said anything about your being here, and we will defer your visit till to-morrow. But promise you will not fail us then. I am going to sit in his room, as he says he feels better when I am

by his side. Do you know, Mr. Brady, I am not in the least anxious about these would-be assassins. What matters who they were? All I wish now is, that my father may get well soon, and that we may leave Ireland! Good day."

Punctual as men usually are when their time becomes of uncertain tenure, Dick Bolton drove up to Lacken's at seven o'clock with his carpet-bag, which was deposited in that horrid outrage on civilization a double-bedded room, beside the portmanteau which Phinny Codd, as a make-believe, had been ordered to prepare for a visit of a couple of days to the country.

"In the middle of terrum too, bedad, sow-et 'tis," Mr. Codd, ruminated, as he was packing. "Mr. Bates and the chewthre will be mighty put out if they come to larn y'er gone."

Dinner was ordered in the coffee-room, and as we entered we were aware of the presence, at a table in a remote angle, of an elderly gentleman, the only person in the room, who had apparently finished his banquet, as he was cracking nuts in a loud resonant manner. A tall lean figure, in a blue coat and brass buttons, and yellow vest, surmounted by a red face topped with white hair, not unfamiliar to me.

"And mind! Let the pancakes be hot," added Dick, as Mat the waiter, with a superb sweep, removed the battered plated cover of the soup tureen as if he were unveiling a statue.

"Silence!" shouted a voice, accompanied by the thumping of a nut-cracker on the table. "Silence, I say, over there!"

"Yes, Colonel! It's me that's talkin'!" said Mat, volubly, rolling his eyes, and winking at us with much earnestness, and an air of entreaty, "I wont do it agin." Then, as he pretended to hand round the plates, he whispered—"For the love of the Lord don't mind him, gintlemen! he'll soon have had enough. He's had a pint a' sherry wid his Dublin Bay—and a bottle of Sneyd wid his steak—and a pint a' port wid his marrabones, and that's the third half-pint he's had sinst dinner was over."

"What is he drinking?"

"What is he dhrinkin', yer honner? Ah! the rayal stuff, no less. He takes 'ud in half-pints wid wather, and maybe he'll be ayquil to one more, or maybe two more yet. It's ould Finucane, of the county Sligo. And he'll be up walkin' round Stephen's Green at five a'clock tamarra mornin', and shwimmin in the say aftherwards, may be, to

kule himself. Take no notis, for the Lord's sake, whatever he does!"

It was not easy to follow Mat's advice. Some time later, in the absence of the waiter, as Dick and I were conversing, we were aware that the Colonel had got on his legs, and was approaching us with difficulty, but still with a very evident determination as to his ultimate direction. We went on with our talk, till a bony hand and a blue cuff and brass buttons descended on the table between us with a thump; and then turning our eyes, we saw impending over us the visage of the man of many half-pints of "real stuff."

"Mee opiny'n of you two," he said at once, in a manner impetuously candid, "is, that ye're not worth kicking! I appayled to you for silence, as mee nerves couldn't bear the slit'st noise; and ye'r both roaring and shouting a purpess! There's mee kyard!—not that ye'll take any notus —unless p'raps I pull your noses—both of you. And——"

Mat at that moment coming in with a marrow-bone, rushed forward. "Yes, Colonel! I tould them to be quite. They're rayal gentlemen, and will be bound to give you satisfaction whin you come back. There's a message, Colonel, just come

in to Mr. Lacken to say yer wanted at the Kildare, to settle a row there's goen on there betune Mr. O'Shay and Captain Power. They'll not give in to any man in Eye'erland but yerself."

The Colonel, ignorant of Mat's winks and faces, was evidently much mollified. His features relaxed—

"Ye didn't do it a purpess? And ye're gentlemen? Then, if ye'll apollygise, when I come back I'll retract everything." He tried to look dignified. "At present I'm called away to adjust a little matter. I'll make them fight if I can: it prevents ill blood. I'm afraid of that little Power, though. It will be hard to dhraw him."

And, muttering to himself, he walked, with the assistance of the waiter, as far as the hall, when he received another message to say the quarrel was arranged, whereupon he took another half-pint and then took himself off to bed, by the aid of many legs and arms.

"No use, Dick, in a Spartan slave after that Sligo Colonel! And to think the business we are engaged upon may be traced to the same cause!"

I am sorry to say, nevertheless, that there was somehow a secret elevation about us as if we

were much finer fellows than we should have been if we had not to get up so early.

"I shall not fire at him to hit him," quoth Dick, "although he so insulted me. I am no great hand with firearms anyway: I once shot at a crow and missed it."

Kilbarrack Church is in ruins. It stands near the sea shore, a few miles outside Dublin. The wall which once surrounded the graveyard is broken down, the cattle stray in at pleasure to nip the rich herbage which crops up above the heads of those who are taking their rest. The monumental tablets and stones are broken, defaced, overgrown with weeds.

As we dismissed the car, which had been engaged over night, at some distance from the clump of trees which marked the ruin, the driver, with a knowing look, asked—

"Do you want a clerk for early morning mass in the ould church beyant? I could lave the mare here fasthened up by the hedge, and I'd be proud to carry the prayer books that you've got in the little box there for yer honner."

The placid beauty of the early morning, the twittering of the birds in the bushes, the whistle of the curlew as he rose from the sea-bordered

meadow, the lowing of the herds half-buried in the deep grass, were not in unison with our "little affair." As we came near the churchyard I made out the figures of three men standing inside the ruined porch—the business of the hour asserted itself.

"I see Prendergast, Considine, and the doctor—at least, I suppose the third man is the medico. No; I declare it's the American colonel. What on earth can he be doing here?"

Our salutations were studiously polite, and the bows that Considine made, and the way he clacked his heels as he stood on a gravestone and received us at the entrance, would have produced a sensation in any court in Germany.

"Colonel Slattery is here, gentlemen, in consequence of the medical friend mewtewally selected being engaged in attending a lady in the sthraw, and as the gallent officer has studied medicine"—Colonel Slattery nodded—"in the most ayminint schools, and was good enough to perpose to come with us, I thawt I might venture to attach him to our little party on this intheresting occasion. Have you had much expayrience in this work?" inquired Mr. Considine *sotto voce* when we had measured our fifteen paces. "No? Then per-

haps you would not think me intherusive if I asked you to put in two dhrams of powder with my pishtels. It's marked on the flashk. They throw high with more; but they take all that. Any particulars you'd like attended to with these? Thank you. I think our men are very well placed. Will you give the word or shall I? I! Much obliged to you, sir."

We took our places, all but the Colonel, who had mysteriously disappeared.

I posted Bolton, according to the tradition, with his flank to the enemy; but I fancied I had never seen him so stout as he looked that morning, and wished I could have compressed him a little. Behind him was a patch of the old wall, where the ground was clear of gravestones.

Maurice Prendergast, with arms folded, stood with his back to the ruin. The pistols were handed to the two young men, and Dick as I retired gave me a cheerful nod. Mr. Considine's politeness was now of the intensest, most ballet-master overpoweringness, and he planted himself in his place beside an old tree, as if he were the only man on the ground and had all the duel to himself.

"Wan!" he called out in a clear voice, which rang through the ruins. "Tew!" he shouted still

louder. I felt my heart stop. "Foire!" he said sharply, after a pause which seemed an age. I saw the arms levelled as Maurice and Dick Bolton looked for an instant towards each other. The reports were almost simultaneous. I saw Prendergast start, the pistol drop from his grasp, and a stream of blood rush through his fingers as he put his hand to his face. As I ran towards him, Colonel Slattery, with a horrible yell, bounded from behind a gravestone, shouting—"I'm a dead man!" and fell on the grass.

"I declare to you, if I were at the foot of the throne of mercy this moment," gasped out Bolton, on his knees before Maurice, glancing from him to me with a most sorrowful air, "I never—never aimed—never intended to go near you."

"That's the way people are oftenest hit. It's a dangerous practice, Mr. Bolton," quoth Mr. Considine. "But, for the life of me, I can't think how the Colonel got grazed."

Dick Bolton's bullet striking a tombstone, had glanced in a jagged mass, and had inflicted a disfiguring and most terrible-looking wound on Maurice's cheek. Maurice's ball had found out the lurking-place of the gallant Slattery behind an ancient tomb, as he crouched in the dock leaves, and had passed

down through what he called "the fleshy part of his upper leg."

I was busily engaged in binding up the injuries. Pat Considine had run off for the carriages. Suddenly a body of men rushed upon us, and I heard Mr. Bates exclaim—

"My God! There is blood! I'm afraid we're too late, after all! There's murder here already! Oh, Terry! Terry! how could you engage in this?"

CHAPTER X.

THE OUTLAW.

The duel made an unusual sensation in Dublin, but the powers that be were content with heavy recognizances, and a languid trial in which the Crown could procure no witnesses, except Colonel Slattery, who was turned inside-out by the terrible cross-examination of our counsel, Mr. Bruiser, Q.C. So we were acquitted, amid much enthusiasm. Colonel Fraser left the city with his daughter the day after our arrest, and we saw by a notice in a local paper that he had remained for a couple of days at the "Desmond Arms," Kilmoyle; but he passed through Dublin on the very eve of the trial, and sent me a note with the expression of a hope that we might meet in India.

"You cannot forget," he added, "I am bound to feel an interest in you, as you now know and feel you have long indulged in very injurious misconceptions, which had been happily removed."

I did not regret his departure. I had conceived for the man a most bitter and intense dislike. Although the time of my wayward grief had been lived down, I could scarcely revert to the miseries of my early life without a sickness of heart; and his utter indifference to me, and the way in which he spoke of "her," as I had learned to call my mother, had aroused in me a feeling of great antipathy. All I hoped was I might never see him more.

The police could not find out any clue to the midnight outrage. One constable "stated" he remarked three persons, one very dark, like a foreigner, the other two with the air of seafaring men, loitering about the gambling-house, but they went away about eleven o'clock. Constable Doody deposed, that as he was on his beat two hours later he heard the sound of men running, and stood in a doorway to watch. The foremost, on being challenged, leaped to one side and continued his flight, and immediately afterwards a second man, smaller and slighter, rushed past him also. He pursued them both, and heard a car drive away from the door of Morris's gambling-house just as a gentleman came out, who seemed to stop the second man, and was suddenly felled to the ground by him. At

that moment, as he was springing his rattle, he was struck from behind, and he remembered no more.

The whole story was no more than a nine days' wonder; then it died out of men's minds, for there were great troubles coming on the land, and long years passed ere the doings of that night were unfolded to me, as I shall relate by-and-by.

My good old guardian, Mr. Bates, had been obliged to go abroad owing to his failing health, and had abandoned business; but I was cheered by his letters. "Sir Richard is here," he wrote from Wiesbaden; "going fast, I think; your friend Mary has grown one of the most beautiful girls ever you saw: whoever gets her will have a treasure whether she carries Kilmoyle with her or not; and, indeed, what with Sir Richard's extravagance in the old days, and the pretty state they've got that unfortunate country into, it is very little there will be left to the Desmonds soon. Gerald Desmond, the young fellow that's in the Guards, Lord help us, is over here, and wont be long till he spends all the money he has except what is lodged for his commission. He is a good-looking lad, but not so handsome as that wild scamp of a father of his who died before you remember. I am

sorry to say that the same story which applies to Kilmoyle is good for Lough-na-Carra—from bad to worse. Pass your examination as soon as you can, Terry, my boy; you will soon be of age, and the moment you pass there's your berth ready for you. Miss Butler begs to be remembered to you—'Doctor Brady,' as she calls you, she defends you against Major Turnbull, who says he would sooner be in the ranks than serve as a doctor. 'So,' says she, 'I will tell your dear friend and comforter, Herr Professor Wagermann, that he ought to have entered the Nassau Dragoons instead of philandering about Wiesbaden, and that in future you will have nothing to do with doctors.' She became quite enthusiastic on the subject, my boy."

I was lonely enough, but I worked all the harder. How I managed to keep out of politics is more than I can account for, except that I agreed with no party, and took it for granted I must be wrong on all points: my *juste milieu*, in fact, was so small I could only stand on it myself.

"Jack Window has been distinguishing himself in his little craft by attacking a pirate flotilla of heavily-armed junks in the Chinese seas and destroying them in a most artistic manner. I was almost as glad as he could have been when I read

of his promotion to be commander, and his appointment to the 'Termagant:' wrote Standish, who sent me newspapers now and then, and an occasional brief epistle. Standish had married, was going circuit, getting no briefs, but expecting them, and had become the editor of a newspaper, of which he said he "wrote the greater part, including the advertisements."

Maurice Prendergast abruptly quitted college, and I lost sight of him, but I heard that he and his sister were living in the old house near Kilmoyle. The wound which he received caused a deep red scar. One day I was astonished to read an impassioned harangue, which was cited by the paper in which it was reported as a magnificent specimen of eloquence and reasoning.

Wisdom is seldom to be found in the councils of the miserable, and as poverty makes poets—or compels men to write verses—so misery creates orators. The unhappy, the wronged, are eloquent; but eloquence has destroyed more than it has saved, and the great orators of the world stand amid ruins. The many young, and the few elderly, men—honest most of them, foolish many, unpractical all—who vexed heaven with their oratory and raved in prose and verse over the misfortunes of their native

land, measured the chances of success only by the grandeur of their words and the strength of their passions. Maurice's eloquence was angry, fervid, like that of a man who is burning with a sense of wrong, all the greater because it was undefined, and who took comfort in covering with biting invective and indignant reproach the supposed author of his humiliation and suffering. His reasoning was admirable, save for the want of any soundness in the premises. He was one of the foremost among the Young Ireland party. The hound was baying at the elephant, and the elephant was preparing to "squelch it" at the first step which placed it within reach of its legal proboscis. There had been a famine in Ireland, which was indeed but a sudden and violent augmentation and public exhibition before the world of a normal process which had been going on in detail for generations. The political economists were quite delighted. They revel in famines; they expand their wings and float about in the troubled atmosphere as Mother Carey's chickens disport themselves in a cyclone. "See!" they exclaimed, "how beautifully our theory will be proved! Just watch and observe! We beg of you not to interfere with the laws of supply and demand! It is quite certain that if the people can

pay for it, food will go to them: if it does not go, and they die in consequence, it only proves that they did not want food, or ought not to get it, and that they deserved to die! Any attempt to set aside these great principles will prove abortive and ruinous!" They were reminded that on the first appearance—the premonitory symptoms—of the disease which led to this great starvation of the people, the Government, listening only to the voice of humanity, had taken measures to provide food at ordinary rates, and to store it up, so that, sudden as the calamity was, no human beings perished and the sufferings of the hungry were alleviated. "Sheer, downright madness!" they shouted; "it's rank blasphemy!—it's treason against our science! Let us stand by and see the harmonious and wholesome working of our great code. Better let myriads perish than violate eternal principles!"

And so it was that though millions of money were spent many thousands of people famished. The survivors attributed the sacrifice to the deliberate purpose of their rulers. The political economists held that if money were to be granted (and it was most liberally poured out from the Imperial Treasury over the land), it should provide the legions of starving paupers with labour solely on the con-

dition that the labour should yield nothing and be worth nothing. There were boards of works devising plans of working so that no work should be done for which there could be a return; and there were little statesmen racking their small brains to render toil unproductive, and framing circulars and minutes to the end that the army of the poor should be as a flight of locusts—just as useful and no more.

The famine passed away, but it placed an indelible mark on the land. Whilst the multitudes who had escaped the most horrible of deaths were shivering and wondering at their escape, like those who cling to the bank of a torrent and see their kindred perish, the triumphant roar of the great democratic wave which swept over the face of Europe, and submerged thrones and constitutions, reached their ears, and, listening eagerly, they at last began to strain their feeble voices to swell the clamour of the insurgent multitudes. Is it suprising that they hearkened readily to those who told them if they arose and girt up their loins for the struggle they would arouse the sympathy of the world, and would be enabled to shake off a yoke which they had long been taught to regard as the cause of all their misery? Those who told them so, to be sure, were deceiving or ignorant as themselves; in their

reveries they dreamt that one nationality was like another—that what one could do another could do under circumstances totally different. A country gentleman, vain, unwarlike, perverse, and impracticable—some briefless barristers intoxicated by the devotion of their followers—a few ardent journalists, who deemed burning sentences and fervid periods to be potent as volleys of musketry and discharges of grape—weak enthusiasts, who thought that to die for a cause was to gain it—unselfish, but violent, utterly futile, foolish conspirators, who plotted every morning in the newspapers, and held public meetings at night to carry out their secret designs—these, and such as these, joined by the desperadoes who are ever ready to risk the hazard of the die against all odds in any dangerous enterprize, absolutely set to work to wrest Ireland from the dominion of the Crown under which she was ruled hundreds of years before Scotland acknowledged its sway, and for a period almost as long as that during which England herself has been subject to it. The whole scheme burst into thin air before a few rounds of ball cartridge. It melted away like the smoke from the policemen's muskets out of the windows of the farm-house at Ballingarry. But as the tiniest jet of flame from the crater tells of

the tremendous fires raging below, the outbreak proved that the elements of a fierce eruption were underlying the crust which scarcely warmed to the touch of that expiring flash. The volcano is burning yet. Ever since that time a number of well-meaning people have been toiling up the heaving mountain-side with tin cans and watering-pots, dribbling the contents down the crater by way of extinguishing the flame and quenching the fervid fires.

"Nice times it is indeed," says Phinny Codd. "Here was I tuk up this mornin' for carryin' consayled arrums, and what was it but the blade of the ould knife I scrape the boots wud. The polis swore 'twas a pike-head, when any fool could see the differ— "

"Did you ever see a pike-head, Phinny?"

"Never a raal one, yer honner. I've seen picthers of them; lasteways, things they tould me was pikes, but that was when I was a gossoon, yer honner. The ould Romans I heerd tell—I don't mane the Roman Catholics, ye know—used their pikes and made the lads caper."

"The ould Romans had not to deal with muskets and bayonets, Phinny."

"Oh! I suppose not indeed, yer honner. Well for them it was, too. But a pike does not want catheridges, and it's chape too."

I suspect Mr. Codd knew more about pikes than he liked to admit. He, like every one else, was much excited about "poor Mr. Prendergast," and about politics generally.

"Purty elections they are! It's myself pities those poor English if they has to git out of the members we're sendin' them this time what the boys want over here! Bedad, they'll be trying to insinse them into what they'd like for themselves, and it's little they'll have if they get what they're worth. Why, they couldn't represent themselves properly if they was put to it."

One night, after "the Rebellion of '48" had died out, as I sat reading for my last examination, a tap came to the outer door. I opened it, and Maurice Prendergast stood there. His face was haggard, hard lines seamed his pale thin cheek. The bright red scar heightened the expression of desperation and resolve stamped on his features, as he glanced upon me with bloodshot eyes.

"Terence Brady," said he, "I have come to you for shelter. An hour here may save me."

I took him by the hand, and led him in without a word.

"I suppose you know all?" he exclaimed. "There is a reward upon my head. Our struggle

is over for the present. We have been deceived. The miserable wretches have been so trodden down there is no strength or manhood left in them. They have abandoned us to our fate. If it were to save my life a hundred times over, I would not stir a step, but I still live to hope. How long, O Lord!—how long?"

"You are ill, Maurice. You need repose. I will do all I can to save you. For God's sake take some rest now, and we will think of safety to-morrow."

"Ill!" repeated he; "Rest! Yes; God knows, I am ill—sick at heart. Rest I shall never know till my work is done, or I meet the fate of those who have trodden the same path before me. Do you think there is rest even in the grave for those who love their country, and hear, ay, with the cold dull ear of death, her dying groans and the voice of her despair?"

"Maurice, I know that you are deeply compromised, but I believe that even now that vindictive and ferocious Government which you have done your best to overthrow, would freely forgive you if you sought for pardon."

He struck the table with his clenched fist, and, with an oath, burst out—

"Were it to redeem all dear to me from penury, and save my soul from eternal torment, I would not."

I caught the sound of steps on the stairs, coming upwards, and put my finger to my lips. There was a knock at the door.

Maurice's face darkened as he caught my signal, and listened to the footsteps. Putting his hand inside his breast, he drew forth and quietly cocked a pistol, whispering—

"They are here; do not be afraid that I shall do them harm. This is for myself; I will not be taken alive."

I drew him by the arm to my bedroom.

I took my college gown, and, putting Maurice into my old arm-chair, threw it over him, and dragging the bedclothes off, placed them on the back of it, as though they had been thrown off in a hurry as I was getting out of bed.

The knocking was growing louder. I was in my dressing-gown and slippers. Making a pretence of opening the bedroom door as though it had been shut, I went in great apparent haste to answer the summons.

"Who is there?" I inquired.

"Be good enough to open the door, Mr. Brady. There is an important message for you."

As I turned the key two men in plain clothes glided in, and took possession of my room.

"We beg pardon, sir. It is well known that you are a loyal gentleman, Mr. Brady, but I am compelled to visit you in the discharge of my duty. You know Mr. Maurice Prendergast?"

"I do."

"Have you seen him lately?"

"Before I answer that question, tell me who you are, and by what right you come into my room?"

"We are police constables, and I hold in my hand a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Maurice Prendergast on a charge of high treason. And now, sir, I ask you have you seen him—and if so, when?"

"You have no right to put questions to me. But suppose that I were to tell you that I had seen him—seen him in this room this very night—what then?"

One of the policemen, taking the candle which I had left upon the table, as I was speaking walked round the room, looked into the presses, and at last entered my bedroom.

Maurice's hat lay on a chair near the table—

the man's eye rested on it. He cast a quick, sharp glance at me, and then at his chief, as the latter exclaimed—

"In this room to-day! You see we were quite right, Corrigan: he is in the College."

"He certainly was, and for all I know may be in the College now. But my premises are not very extensive, and you can judge for yourself whether he is here or not. I dare say you are aware there are more rooms than mine, and there are many where he is more likely to be than here."

Corrigan returned and glanced at me sharply again as he said—

"I can't see any sign of him, Sergeant Brand. Perhaps he may have slipped into the park and got over the wall. There are two more rooms we have got to call on yet."

Sergeant Brand now walked to the bedroom door. He looked under the bed, his hand resting on the very chair as he did so, examined the presses, —and saw nothing.

"I suppose, Mr. Brady, there is no use in asking you where Mr. Prendergast went to, for you would not know?"

I replied by a shake of the head. The sergeant

took another survey of the room; Constable Corrigan held the candle up the chimney, opened the small pantry again, and shook his head. Then they both shook their heads, looked at each other, and took their departure; but I thought one of them knew more than he cared to make his chief become acquainted with.

Maurice listened till the noise of their footsteps receded in the court below.

"Hide the light, Brady!" he said. "The voice of one sounded familiar to me."

He crept to the window, and by the lamp in the square we could see the dark figures of the police moving along by the wall. At the angle of the square they were met by a man.

"Do you see the scoundrel?—that limping fellow they are speaking to? Don't you recognise him?" asked Prendergast. "See; they are going off together. Well, we may meet again, Mr. Michael Slattery—and if we do"——

"Why put yourself in the power of such wretches? Is it not the old, old story?"

"And if there were no risks, where would be the sacrifices? It is by these we must measure the greatness of our cause."

"Well, but by that measure burglary and

robbery, being highly dangerous, thank Heaven, may be held to be great causes by burglars and robbers, at all events—"

"Let us not argue the point. I am about to bid you farewell. If I escape I see you no more, for I cannot live in this wretched and degraded land. My sister, God help her! will join me in the New World, where Ireland is building up a nation. Good-bye, Terence; God bless you!"

He paused for a moment, and by the lamp I saw his features were working in great agitation.

"Terence!" he continued, "there is one thing wrings my heart. Yes! I must tell you, ere I go, we have a common bond in our misery—I love Mary Butler—love her with a madness, all the greater because it is desperate! I tell it to you because your love is as hopeless as my own. No; do not deny it. Love is a fountain of light; no shadow can live in its radiance. Yes! Heaven help us both! When I go I leave my soul behind me! I envy you, because you will tread the unhappy yet blessed soil that is pressed by her foot. But, far as I may be, I shall never lose sight of her! Am I not a happy fellow, Terence Brady?—Twenty-two years of age, a pauper, a proscribed traitor;—in love with two impossibilities—

Ireland, and the niece of Richard Desmond of Kilmoyle!"

He laughed bitterly.

"It is happiness, indeed! I almost wish the fellow just now had put his paw upon me. Once I thought you might be a rival, and I hated you. I was only a boy then. Now that you are as hopeless as myself, I pity you—just as you pity me for my devotion to my country. And now for my plunge!"

He opened the door and looked out.

"You will certainly be taken," I cried. "Stay here till the morning, and we will devise some plan—some stratagem"——

"Taken?—never! My plans are all fixed. I must go. They may return and make surer search. Heaven pity you and me! Good night!"

He walked heavily downstairs, and I heard him singing loudly as he walked across the square and turned towards the College park.

I listened till all was still.

"Yes, he is right! I love Mary Butler. I am a fool—an utter, hopeless fool! But can I help it? No;—no more, my good Terence Brady, than you can being six feet high, or having a very soft, womanly, irresolute sort of nature, and

excitable to boot, with a tendency to day-dreams, sentiment, and the like. So to bed, sir fool! and wish that poor wretch a safe escape from justice, and pray for your own delivery from bonds which, alas! seem rivetted for ever."

CHAPTER XI.

THE "DOCTOR'S" DEBUT.

It is a fine autumn evening, and the breeze, which trifles with straws and dried leaves, and chance poultry feathers, in the parade-ground at Tilbury, can scarcely blow out the folds of the ensign which has been hoisted to do honour to her Majesty's ship "Termagant," John Window, Esq., commander, just returned from the East Indies, now anchored in the Thames off the Falcon Hotel, to the great delight of the guests at that ancient hostelry, in company with the transports "Mary Brown" and "Anna Maria Jones," having on board a wing of the "Bengal Tigers." I am sitting in all the glories of an assistant-surgeon's undress of that period (or of every or any period, in the British army)—on the rampart, among a group of young gentlemen from Fort Pitt, mostly of the medical persuasion, but inclusive of the species ensign and

lieutenant. We watch the old Commandant as in full fig he paces up and down with Colonel Grimshaw and Major Bagshaw, whose conversation reaches us in fragments as they pass.

"It's a rascally shame to send us to Ireland—that's what I say. There is the Eighty-second, which ought——"

And the Colonel's voice dies away, and no more is heard in articulate speech till at the next wheel and turn the manly note of Bagshaw takes up the tale.

"——, the senior major of the whole batch, with five years more service than Piper! It's a confounded shame—that's what I say; and if I could afford it I'd see the whole service——"

And then comes nothing but "buzz," "buzz," "buzz," 'twixt us and silence; and the medicos, ensigns, and lieutenants think something or other that is going to happen to each is "a confounded shame," and grumble accordingly.

I had been gazetted to the "Queen's Own" Bengal Tigers as assistant-surgeon, and had the day before received orders from my chief at Chatham, to begin my career, to report myself for duty with a detachment proceeding from Tilbury Fort.

My examination had been passed triumphantly. I

had borne all jokes, practical and unpractical, which as a "pill" and a "Paddy" I was bound to expect and to undergo. My preliminary training at Sweatenham had not been without its uses at Chatham; and I was established in the good graces of the authorities who deigned to be aware of my existence at all, or to take any interest in my work.

Sir Philip was pleased at the way in which the examiners spoke of me; and if there had been better news from Lough-na-Carra—if—alas! that I must say it—if I could, though the thought made my veins thrill and tingle as the blood rushed to my heart——if I could but see Mary Butler once more, and ask her—not to forget me—no, that would not do—forget is too cold a word—well, then—if I could only just see her without troubling myself now to think what I ought to say, I would feel at least satisfied, if not happy, sustained in my purpose of doing my duty, and working on to the end.

Would any one believe me if I told them I did not take a full look more than once at myself in the glass when I was arrayed in my new coatee of blazing scarlet, with its elegant facings of gosling green?—that I never drew my sword, and examined

the glittering blade, stamped with the renowned name of "Spriggs and Tacks, army tailors, warranted" (not to shed blood), and to bend sooner than break or cut?—that I did not practice a few graceful poses and attitudes?—and that I did not grow immensely red as I issued forth in all my splendour to dine with the P.M.O. the first night I became regimental assistant-surgeon of the Bengal Tigers? I suppose not, and so I shall not make any statement on the subject. All I know is that I was tolerably contented with my position in those days. I had no troubles about relative rank; I did not care whether Ensign Stock or Lieutenant Trotter was above or below me, or had rank "with and after" me in choice of quarters or not. Nor did I burn with a desire to sit as Minos with Æacus Styles and Rhadamanthus Robinson, on Boards, to condemn forage-caps, or pass sentence on a faulty pipeclay contractor. No badge of inferiority in belts or feathers was stamped upon my soul.

Marmaduke Blossom, M.D., Deputy Inspector-General of Hospitals, was a gentleman of gracious presence, inclined to be very much *embonpoint*, and with a lofty manner in the ordering of doctors, patients, orderlies, wards, and hospital belongings generally, which marked him as a very Napoleon

of medicine. He was, for the time, a highly decorated man; but these were Præ-Crimean days, and the Russian war, the Chinese War, the Persian War, and the Indian Mutiny, had not produced that crop of ribands, crosses, medals, and clasps which has been sown broadcast over the left breasts of this fortunate generation. He had a mild medal or two for Sikh and Caffre campaigns, but he no more expected a C.B. than he did a Garter. He was given to botany and entomology—had written a monogram on the "Hocus Gigas" of South Africa—papers on the "Pocus Minor of Loodianah"—on the "Use of Stimulants in Cases of Weakness and Prostration"—and "Blossom on Bile" was much esteemed by the Indian profession. He had invented a very acute agony for malingerers, in which nitric acid and a powerful galvanic battery had some share; and he was altogether regarded as a highly accomplished officer and a light of the department. Mrs. Blossom was a very thin, acute-figured and sharp-faced little woman, who always spoke in the plural number—unless she consented to a momentary divorce in the form, "the Inspector-General and I;"—and there were many little Blossoms, whose governesses—both parlour and nursery—and nursery-maids, and nurses—were objects of much dread to the youthful

medical officers of the garrison, as there were stories abroad of "fellows" being sent off to the West Indies and the Gold Coast, at a moment's notice, for the imputed offence of winking at them.

The P.M.O.'s quarters were the scene of the festivity to which I was bidden.

As in duty bound I was early, and was overwhelmed by the condescensions of Mrs. Blossom and the dignity of her great chief, whom I was in the habit of following clinically from ward to ward far more frequently than was good for his reputation in my eyes. There were three medicine men of low degree, who had, like myself, come *au pied de la lettre* of our invitations. They were severally engaged in securing the young affections of four little Blossoms, the extra one of whom was a great embarrassment to McTavish, Byles, and O'Shea respectively. A sad fraülein, on a remote chair, superintended the blandishments of the diplomatic doctors and the manners of her youthful charges. My arrival relieved them all immensely. Miss May, a straight-haired, wiry child, was at once attached to me, but I was liberated by the appearance of the Barrack-Master, who was the possessor of an orchard, and had the best claim to the young affections of my little friend. Colonels, majors,

and captains, and surgeons, with or without wives and daughters, arrived, one after the other, till the glory culminated in the apparition of the Port-Admiral and of General Sir Thomas and Lady Tickell. It was a great relief to find myself near the end of the table, far removed from the blaze of the great.

"I wouldn't advise you to venture on that fizz," said my neighbour. "The fizz at Chatham is like Vauban's masterpieces—not meant to be taken."

My neighbour was a young engineer just entering on a brilliant career of drainage and culvert-making, and barrack reports all over the world.

"You are going to join the Bengal Tigers, I hear, to-morrow."

"Yes; I was in orders to-night. Do you know them?"

"Not very well. Desmond, the man who commands the detachment at Tilbury, is a swell, you know. He exchanged from the Coldstreams, where he got his lieutenancy early—a nephew of Sir Richard Desmond. The famine has stopped the rents, you know, and he has had to leave, I suspect, for more reasons than one."

I knew Sir Richard's third brother, who had always lived abroad, had a son in the army; but

there were no friendly relations between the uncle and the young man, and he never appeared at the Castle. Here he was coming to the surface at last —close at hand too.

Next morning I was on my way to Tilbury, and was duly presented by the medical officer in charge to my combatant chief, Captain Desmond.

He was a handsome young fellow, with a great air of his uncle about him: the same easy, indolent manner, relieved by a quick, observant look; and at times there was a curl about the lip, and a sneering coldness in his voice, which, far more than his natural disposition, had gained for him the sobriquet of "the Cynic."

"And so you are the son of that Jack Brady of whom I heard so much when I was a youngster. There was something about my aunt Mary—eh? And that old scamp of an uncle of mine is your guardian! 'Pon my word, I hope he had not much to do with your teaching."

He listened indolently, looking at me with half-closed eyes as I told him how very little his uncle had to say to me.

"Well, it's small matter to me. When he goes—and they tell me he can't last long—my uncle Denis will take his place; and we will see what he

can do with all that his excellent brother has left of Kilmoyle. By the bye, Mr. Brady, you know my fair cousin Mary Butler? She made a little sensation last year in London for the short time she was allowed to delight the world. I was not so fortunate as to see her then, for I was on leave; but I think she promised to be good-looking, but rather heavy in hand, and stupid."

"Stupid, Captain Desmond? She must be changed indeed. I have not met her for some time now; but I feel sure she never could be stupid. Even as a young girl she was sensible and clever."

"Ah, you see, sensible women are apt to become stupid as they grow old. And clever girls become such deuced bores. However, I daresay I shall be able some day to judge for myself. I'm very glad to have a Kilmoyle man in the regiment. Good morning. We shall meet at mess."

I wandered about the barrack-yard, admiring the energy of the British washerwomen, listening involuntarily to the fervid discourse of the matrons of the tub among themselves, or to the short and very imperative admonitions which they addressed to their young broods as they played in the vicinity.

"Guard turn out!" Out tumbled the occupants

of the gate-house and fell into line, and there came in sight in the gateway a portly naval officer in uniform—cocked hat, epaulettes and all. Could it be? No other man in all the land could ever smile like that, or look around him with such large staring genial eyes. It was Jack Window.

He stopped for a moment, put up his hand to his forehead, as if to clear his view, and in an instant we were shaking hands—two a-piece—with a vehemence which much perturbed Sergeant M'Cracken and the guard, and caused a sensation in the barrack-yard among the idlers. In another moment the old fort-wall shook as the first gun of the "Termagant" opened with a salute. The General of the district and the Port Admiral from Chatham had both arrived on a tour of inspection, and Captain Window was under orders to anchor in the stream alongside the transports which had arrived with a wing of "my regiment."

"We hear there's mischief stirring in that terrible country of yours, Terry," said Captain Jack. "By Jove, I think the fellow was right who said that the only thing to do was to scuttle the whole island."

"Whoever lives in Ireland will be Irish, when it comes up from the bottom. If you peopled the land

with English and Scotch, history tells you that they would be less easy to deal with than the natives. Better try to stop the leaks."

"Hang your history, Terry. Don't let us talk politics. I only mean there's always a row going on there."

"Did you ever see the ocean calm when the wind was blowing? And yet no one can see the wind, though he can feel it."

"I would to heaven we could get a calm for once over there," quoth Captain Jack. "I say—drop politics."

I told him all that had passed since we parted, and then he jerked out small waifs and strays of his cruisings.

"I say, Terry," he broke in suddenly, "lest I forget it, what became of that dark fellow—that mate of yours with the black eyes and handsome face I took a dislike to—Pendergrass, Prendergas, or some such name?"

"He left College—was engaged in the troubles of 1848, and went abroad. I have not heard of him for a year or more; but I'm told he went to America, and that his sister is about to sell the place and join him. She did wonders during the famine."

"Then, by Jove, it was he!" exclaimed Captain

Jack, slapping his thigh. "I seldom mistake a face. I ran into Pensacola from Key West—it's a Yankee port in the Gulf, you know, Terry—and the fellow who boarded us—as cheeky a chap as ever I met, one Lieutenant O'Driscoll—had a man with him whom I could have sworn was our friend. And who do you think O'Driscoll was? Hang me if it wasn't our old acquaintance! It was hard to stand, I tell you, when he asked me, in a regular Cape Cod drawl, with a touch of Cork in it—'Cap'en, say, did you ever happen, when you were on the Irish station, to run a little cruise over this side after a Baltimore clipper called the *Sarey Sykes?*' I was nigh choking on the spot."

"Had the other, whom you think was Maurice Prendergast, a mark on his face?"

"Yes—a red scar on the cheek: the very thing which prevented my being quite sure of him."

"And what happened?"

"What could I do but be civil—keep Mr. O'Driscoll at arm's length—and get out of Pensacola as soon as I could."

When he was returning from his interview with the Port-Admiral, Captain Jack had just time to whisper—

"Get ready, my lad; service companies and all.

The Cove of Cork—we are to be off with the morning's tide."

It is the custom of the service to act in war time with great publicity, but to keep all movements a dead secret in time of peace—*argal*, Grimshaw and Bagshaw, who had had some inkling of the destination, kept it in their bosoms, and no note of preparation was sounded till orders came round, and then there was of course a cry of "shame." Captain Desmond took it philosophically—"It's a bad time of the year to go over, if ever there's a good time. Rivers all dry, of course—too late for hunting, too early for shooting. However, I have a morbid curiosity to see the country, for I belong to it, though little of it belongs to me. As I was born there, I suppose I must plead guilty to the charge of being an Irishman, but I ain't unlucky enough to be a man of genius as well."

Lieutenant Tweedle, who had just engaged an eminent professor to come over every day from Gravesend and give him lessons on the flute, was furious. "Spider" Leyton, the ensign, who had the day before fallen in love with—"Egad! the ver' lovliest gurl eva' saw in my life!" was in despair. But the first duty of a soldier is to obey—and pretty

hard times of it he will find if he does not—and by that time next evening we were leaning our chins on the bulwarks of the "Anna Maria Jones," or peering through our glasses at the shore, as with the ebb-tide and a light breeze we slipped down past Dover Castle and shaped our course for Land's End.

CHAPTER XII.

COUNTRY QUARTERS.

THE regimental order-book was going round the little party of officers just before dinner in the dingy mess-room of the barracks in the pugnacious town of Thurles.

"I see Desmond 's in orders for a month's leave; he's always getting leave," yawned Wilmot.

"Don't you know his uncle 's dead?" said Nash. "I just saw him at Cork, and he was starting for Nice. He told me he expected the other uncle, who is coming home from India, to arrive in England next week."

"Lucky fellow! to find himself a baronet with a fine estate."

"Oh, it's not such a good property after all, I'm told. The late man went through a great deal of money, and it is bad times for the landlords now, if ever there were good ones here."

It was the first intelligence I had of an event long expected, but that night a letter with the Nice postmark upon it, from Mr. Bates, announced to me the loss of a link in the chain which bound me to the past. "Miss Butler bears up wonderfully," wrote my guardian. "There never was such a nurse in the world, and poor Sir Richard may well have thought, as he did in his last wanderings, that an angel hovered around him. Gerald Desmond, who kept aloof from his uncle for years past, when he heard the last news, wrote to say he would come over, but Sir Richard did not appear very anxious to see him, though he did not tell Mary to decline the visit. I am glad to hear he is disposed to be friendly to you. Denis, too, is on his way home, and will discover he is Sir Denis on his arrival.

"He will, I fear, find the estate in a very undesirable condition. Poor Sir Richard, as you are aware, was only too easy with the tenants, but he could not do without money; and if things went on badly when he was abroad they went worse when he visited Kilmoyle. The rental has been getting smaller, and the mortgages and interest have been growing. Still, all might have gone on with leases falling in and prices rising

but for the famine. The Kilmoyle estate and Ballymoyle were heavily assessed for the rates in aid; and there is no hope of back rent at all, as the tenants are dead or fled. The mortgages mount up to near ten years' purchase of the rental in good times; and what they come to now is more than I can say, till we get things to rights. Everything will depend on Sir Denis, and if he is as rich as they say, and manages Kilmoyle as well as he did Auripore and those Indian places I have heard tell of but don't remember the names of, he may save a good deal of the property yet. Of course Miss Mary will live with the new baronet, who was always anxious she should come to him. He was dotingly fond of her poor mother, and if he wont be proud of her he must be worse than a Turk."

Farther and farther the hope of my life was drawing from me; the vision slowly fading away. I put a band of crape on the arm of my regimental jacket in memory of my departed guardian, and trudged about my little hospital day after day with sinking heart. The new man could take no interest in me; on the contrary, he would regard me with dislike, for I knew he never forgave my father after he heard how he had treated his sister.

He was, I was told, a stern, cold, imperious man, and Mr. Bates' letters showed the good gentleman was rather astonished at the contrast he presented to easy-going Sir Richard. "I am glad to tell you Sir Denis approved of all we had done, but he insisted on having the tomb opened and the remains sent over to Kilmoyle. The Carrara marble will rather astonish them, and I think Sir Denis will open his eyes when he sees the parish church. He is very tender and kind to Mary, and already has made great way with her, for he is direct in purpose and very thoughtful, and he just thaws when she comes into the room like a snow-flake in the sun. I think he is rather pleased with his nephew Gerald, and it is arranged he is to get another month's leave, if possible, and they will go over to Ireland together. Master Gerald is evidently struck with his lovely cousin; who could help it? She is to be mistress of everything, but there is some young lady whom Sir Denis took home from India to go and live with them, I believe, the daughter of an old friend, though as I am not favoured with confidence I ask no questions. He rather astonished the London attorneys; they wrote to say 'they supposed he did not intend to reside at Kilmoyle after his long absence in foreign countries, but assured

him of their readiness to take charge of the property.' He was down on them at once. By return he wrote to Fagg and Grubb, giving instructions and memoranda and views which fairly took away their breath. They would 'at once draw up schedules, showing the whole state of the property, accompanied by maps and rent-rolls, and tables of produce and revenue of all kinds, specifying all particulars connected with every tenant or person living on the estate, to be ready by his arrival in Ireland, within three weeks from the date of his letter.' He intends, he told them, to reside permanently in Kilmoyle; the shooting-box in the highlands and the hunting-seat near Leamington are to be sold at once, and only the family residence in Grosvenor-street, from which the present tenants are to be turned out as soon as possible, is to be retained. Forms after the Indian fashion were annexed, to be filled up with detailed statistical tables about prisons, county rates, poor rates, and churches, schools, fisheries, mines, forests, rivers, lakes, pasturage, arable, peat—Protestants, Catholics, Methodists, Quakers, &c. &c. As Fagg wrote to me—'I think Grubb and I will have enough to do for the rest of our natural

lives. It's like an abstract of all the blue books, Devon commissions, poor-law returns, and parliamentary papers issued since the Union. I am thinking we will have rather a different time of it with Sir Denis from what we had with Sir Richard. He'll find it's all very well for Hindoos and Indians; but the Irish can't be managed in that way, as he will find out, or I'm mistaken.' Miss Mary desires to be remembered to you, and says she hopes to see you again at the castle when they return, and she has been saying very kind things of you to Sir Denis, who, you know, has a sort of *rancune* against the name. She must see you in your uniform, she says, to ascertain if there is any difference to the feminine eye between the attire of Mars and Æsculapius. Poor Major Turnbull is much cut up about the loss of his old friend, and says he can't bear to go back to the castle—for the present, at any rate; though Sir Denis, who knew him well in India, insists on his staying in the old quarters. As for myself, when I wind up Sir Richard's affairs as far as I can, I will retire from work and amuse myself—sorry fun I fear it will be, Terry—with looking after the affairs of Lough-na-Carra as well as I can from some warm spot abroad, making a run over now and

then whenever I am wanted, if indeed I can be of any use to any one."

For one long year I only heard thus of Sir Denis and Mary Butler at intervals. The regiment was broken up in detachments, and at first I was left at Thurles to attend to the sick, of whom, as typhus and whisky were busy in the county, there were only too many. Then I was transferred to Clonmel, and then I was moved from place to place till I at last found myself in the sweet town of Athlone. There I was within a ride of Kilmoyle and Kilcarra, and the very day after my arrival I heard that Sir Denis was expected home. The news that the new proprietor was coming to the long-neglected family residence caused a variety of feeling among the people. The tenantry wondered whether he would be as "easy" as his brother, or whether he would be "a tyrant:" the few proprietors who lived on their estates rather disliked the idea of being overshadowed by a man of such reputation and reputed wealth.

The Bengal Tigers had now gathered up one wing in Athlone as if prepared for a new flight, and "Major Bagshaw and the officers of her Majesty's own West Lincoln Regiment" (which con-

sisted, by the by, of some sixty per cent. of Irishmen, who would have been exceedingly puzzled to say where the regiment got its designation), "requested the honour of the company, &c. &c.," of a number of the neighbouring gentry to dinner in order to celebrate the occasion. I confess till my mess bills came round, I liked these convivial meetings, though our cook was a thorn in the flesh, whose doings were not easily to be eradicated, and our wine was "the best that could be got"—furious as fire in sherries, fiery as lava in clarets, and suggestive of perry, sugar, and white-lead in champagnes—and the glitter of plate had ceased to be a glaze for the burnt soups, under-done fish, indescribable *entrées*, and portentous joints.

"I ovaw I nevaw sit down to dinnaw at awr mess but I feel as if I wa engwaged in poshtive hostilties: first a despwet skermwish with the swoop," gasped little Crammer, "in which you're sure to be wowsted; then you move on the fish, which pwesents a dreffle resistance—what's not bone is hawder than bone, and what's soft is softer—egad! than anything. Then the howid and awtful enemy thwows out deuced lot of small wowwying fawmations—invincible squaws and columns of unenterable *entrées* at quawtaw distance. Gethwing up all

our stwenth we engwage in a sangwiney encountaw with an impwegnable joint, and as we retiwaw awfily shattawed are attacked by a relentless and persecuting pastwy, which nevaw leaves a fellaw till he's dead on the field. The only comfort is there's no howid band to pwolong our agonies."

Still I enjoyed mess dinners immensely. I was young and strong, and I rejoiced in meeting people in the animation of the social hour.

Among the company this night, were outsiders from the distant regions of Kilmoyle, who knew who I was and remembered the poor old granddad—Caseys, Cassidys, and unconnected Bradys.

"What has become of Maurice Prendergast?" I asked of young Casey, of Barnwell.

"They say he's in the United States, but there is almost a certainty he has been over here lately—men who know him well have seen him about Kilmoyle. He would be pardoned if he would ask for it, but he's a most malignant rebel. Rose, poor girl, has made several attempts to sell the old house and the few acres; but no one will buy, and the country people swear the land shan't go till times get better and there's a fair price to be had."

"I say, Cassidy," shouted Lord Belbrook across the table, "you know Sir Denis came last night to

Kilmoyle for good at last? The castle has been put to rights, and Miss Butler will rule the roast in the county as far as beauty is concerned. There's a deuced pretty girl with her though, I've heard. Sir Denis will give no balls—only friendly dinners."

"I wonder does he hunt?" asked Mr. Cassidy.

"Rides like a bird," answered Lord Belbrook; "my nephew Jack says he's a great sportsman. And he'll fight, too, if anyone wants it."

"If he'll keep up the old Kilmoyle claret, and be as free with it as his brother, poor Dick, that's enough for me," quoth Mr. Trench; "but I hear they drink nothing but beer in India."

"He will be hard set to hunt anything but bailiffs, or drink any better stuff than cowld water, if he has to live on what he gets from the boys, anyway," observed Mr. Peyton.

"Why, Peyton, he's a Nabob! Has no end of rupees and mohurs, and all that sort of thing; in sacks, like potatoes, only they're on camels and elephants instead of asses' backs, I hear," said another.

"He'll discover, I fear, there's more difficulty in getting Kilmoyle into order than there was in annexing Auripore," remarked my neighbour, a dark-visaged officer belonging to a detachment lying

alongside us. "That was a great *coup*, and made his name, though it nearly finished him too."

"Do tell us all about the Auripore case, Major Harness, if you please, as you know it," asked Mr. Trench. "I often heard them talking of it lately, and it's awkward meeting a neighbour who has done a great thing if you don't know all particulars."

"I know the story very well, but it's a long one I fear——"

"Oh, let us have it, by all means," exclaimed Lord Belbrook. "I'm not very clear about the pros and cons, though I've heard enough of it in the House, Lord knows."

We sat over our wine, as the Major went on with his story, which he told in a sententious, solemn sort of way. At the close I was breathless—a secret awe crept over me—again there came out of the gloom a dreadful apprehension—an alarm which chilled my blood—indefinite but not the less terrible.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RANEE OF AURIPORE.

"THE Rajah of Auripore," began Major Harness, "was the last of his race—the last of a race which was old when William and Harold were swearing friendship to each other in Normandy, and which was known in India when Alexander was leading his iron men of war from that land towards the home he never was to see. The Rajah was a weak man, fond of pleasure, of poetry, music, perfumes, flowers, nautches—almost as abandoned, in fact, to the delights of sense as if he was an old Roman or a modern Boyard. It would not be correct, perhaps, to say that any nobleman in our own times was ever so reckless or extravagant, that any one had ever so greatly wasted his substance, and neglected the people entrusted to his charge, as the Rajah of Auripore. But if there were such a one, at all events, it was fortunate for him that no Mr.

Desmond was at hand to sit on his delinquencies as judge and executioner—to determine and punish at one and the same time. Well, gentlemen! any way when the young Rajah was summoned from the Zenanah to the throne, disturbances arose in the kingdom. Turbulent nobles levying war against the Rajah, or against each other, created disorders and committed excesses which we all agreed jeopardized the peace of the adjacent British territory.

This Auripore was a wealthy State, and had long attracted the attention of the Honourable Company.

An officer was despatched to Auripore to warn the Rajah that such a spectacle of lawlessness was afflicting to the sense of the Company. The sound of one of his rival's guns had driven the Rajah from his hunting-seat to the protection of the walls of the town. The Rajah asked what he could do. There were those who told him that his enemy had been secretly encouraged by promises of help, if not by the actual assistance of men and money, by the Power which now proffered him safety, if he would sign a treaty. A treaty was signed; an imposing force of British soldiers and Sepoys marched across the frontier and swept through the land with fire and sword. The Resident appointed to Auripore was Mr. Desmond, and the land soon

felt the vigour of his sway. But still there were intrigues within the palace and tumults without. The revenues could not be collected, the turbulent landowners declared that they would not pay tribute. The subsidy fell into arrears; each year added to the total of the debt. The Rajah sought to shut out the admonitions of the Resident by secluding himself in his Zenanah, but you may guess in vain.

"It is my duty to inform your Highness," wrote Mr. Desmond, "that if the grave offences which have been perpetrated against good faith, and if the neglect of your Highness's obligations be continued, no alternative will be left to my Government but to insist on the stipulations of the treaty which your Highness so solemnly formed with us."

The proclamations announcing the suspension of the Rajah's rule were prepared—the measures for taking possession concerted—the land was already mapped out for the purposes of the new Government. A corps of infantry, cavalry, and artillery assembled on the frontier to put down resistance. Suddenly the force was ordered to withdraw. A long convoy laden with gold and silver was escorted from the Residence to the Company's Treasury in Agra. The Rajah dismissed his ministry, his musicians, his nautch-girls; reduced his hordes of

retainers one-half. Some of his father's most able servants, hitherto neglected, were despatched to the most unruly districts to displace his own favourites. Desmond, with whom I was at the time, smiled when he heard the news.

"And who do they say, Moulvie, is at the bottom of all this?" he said to our informant. "Will it last?"

"I hear, my lord, it is a woman. If so, her rule will only endure as long as does the bloom of the flower."

But it lasted longer than we thought, and Desmond felt that a blow had been given to his reputation at Calcutta and in Leadenhall-street. And soon he received "a secret and confidential" despatch, in which the Court said,

"The measures supposed to be necessary for the due enforcement of the treaty stipulations with his Highness the Rajah of Auripore, had caused an expenditure of no less than rupees 270,000 6 annas. The Council could not but express their regret that an error, approaching to precipitancy, had led to such a heavy and, it is thought, unwarrantable outlay."

Desmond held his peace and Auripore continued to struggle on, and to keep wriggling away from

annexation, like a wounded bird from a boa. It was rumoured, after a time, that the Rajah was about to elevate one of his favourites to the throne. "Who was she?" we asked.

"A wonder of the world—a goddess of women; fair as the snows on Dewanghiri; her hair is golden, her eyes are blue, and her skin is white as alabaster."

In due time it was next announced that a child had been born to his Highness. Then shortly after we were told the Rajah was sick, and soon after he died.

At daybreak next morning the people saw proclamations on the walls. They were short and stern—"The Rajah of Auripore having died without legitimate issue, or representative, or successor, the administration of his dominions has devolved, by virtue of treaty, on the Hon. East India Company."

The flames of the Rajah's funeral pyre were still reddening the sky, as Mr. Desmond issued from his Compound and proceeded towards the palace, surrounded by his staff and escort. I was there at the time with the only party of regulars on the spot. The townspeople were alarmed by the tramp of men, and hastening to the gates,

they saw through the gloaming the glare of the matches of the artillery and the sheen of bayonets. Fraser, who commanded the Auripore Contingent, drew the men up in front of the main entrance of the palace; the cavalry of the Contingent were on the flanks, covering the artillery. Inside the building—more like a small suburb than a palace—all was confusion: the natives in turmoil, like a nest of ants.

"And what of the Ranee? What of his Highness's child?" asked an aged vakeel, who had been permitted to bear a writing from the palace to the Resident, which he had read in silence.

His Excellency looked at the envoy, whiffed his cheroot, puffed out a mouthful of smoke, and said—

"There is no Ranee, and you know it. There is no child of the Rajah's living—and you know it."

The vakeel tried to speak—could not—bowed and retired.

"Now, Fraser," said his Excellency, "proceed to execute your orders."

Mr. Desmond rode into the court-yard, which was filled by the terrified followers of the Rajah.

He gave the rein to his syce, and mounted the

steps which led to the piazza in which the Rajah had held his court. He sat down on the Rajah's throne. Musicians, nautch-girls, and hordes of the royal family of Auripore were brought before him; but as each came in terror to his feet, he waved his hand and simply said, "Go!"

His eye was turned towards the grand staircase. Fraser came with long strides down the hall.

"The Ranee is in the Zenanah, sir, and refuses to come. I fear to force the doors, for the men are hardly to be depended on. They are sulky already."

"Go back, Fraser, to the Ranee, as you call her. Say that if she can prove she is the late Rajah's wife, or that her child is his child, all that has been done must be then undone. If she does not come out, I will order Lieutenant Harness to force the doors."

Fraser was about to speak, but a look caused him to depart without opening his lips. In a few minutes he returned, followed by his men. They were guarding a palkee, screened with curtains of golden tissue. The body of the litter was richly gilt and encrusted with precious stones, and from the summit a plume of peacocks' feathers rose out of a cone-shaped socket, glittering with rough emeralds and pearls. It was borne by four natives

in the livery of the late Rajah, and by the side walked a group of veiled women, whose bangles clanked audibly at every step, so great was the silence. An aged man, clad in green and silver robes, with a staff of office in his hand, followed the litter. When the litter-bearers came before the throne on which the Resident sat they laid it down, bowed to the ground, and retired.

"The Ranee has come, your Excellency," said Fraser. "Her Highness is in the litter with her child."

"Let the woman who calls herself the Ranee of Auripore appear, with her child," replied the Resident, speaking in Hindoostanee.

There was a pause for a moment—a rustling, as if of some soft garment inside the curtains of the litter, and then a voice, sweet, full, and strong, rang through the hall.

"The Ranee of Auripore hears the Sahib Resident's words! She knows he cannot mean to outrage a woman and a Queen; he will not call on her to unveil her face before the people. In the name of all that is sacred, she protests against his acts! She appeals to his masters, sure that they will repair the wrong done to one of their most faithful friends and allies!"

"It is by the orders of my masters, the Company, that I claim their rightful territory. I tell you, woman, you are not the Ranee of Auripore, nor is the child you have within there the child of the Rajah."

There was another pause, and the voice spoke again—

"The proofs of what I say, oh, Resident! are clear as day. Let the Resident look and see!"

The old man took a roll of papers and was advancing to the throne, when he was arrested by the words of the Resident—

"It is vain! I know the papers that have been written and the witnesses who have been suborned. But I have proof—proof positive, do you hear, woman?—that the Rajah for two long years has been as one that is dead, without sense or reason, and that he could not contract a marriage. As to the child, the proof that it is not his is in your palkee and in your arms. Produce the child, and all the world will see the truth!"

The Resident leaned slightly forward and waited. A suppressed cry came from within the curtains—then, after awhile, the wail of an infant stole forth, as if it had been awakened from its sleep, and the voice said—

"Take thou the child and judge!"

At the sound of her name one of the maids stepped to the litter, put in her arms, and withdrew them with an infant, slightly clad in a little muslin robe, which permitted its brown legs and arms to be seen.

The Resident examined the little thing as it lay struggling in its nurse's arms, terrified at the strange faces around it; a smile played round his mouth—

"It is well done!—very well done. Now let us see the mother."

As he spoke, springing from the musnud he rushed to the palkee, tore open the curtains, and turning round to the crowd, exclaimed scornfully—

"See the woman who is mother of the Rajah's child!"

Striving in vain to draw back the curtain with one hand, while with the other she sought to clutch her veil and cover her face and bosom, was a woman of singular beauty. She seemed to us all a European. Her golden hair fell in masses over her shoulders, her cheeks flushed anger and shame, and her eyes, burning with rage, gave light and animation to her features. Her arms, covered with

bracelets—her neck, heavy with strings of emeralds and diamonds—were rounded and fair; and as she seized the curtain in her right hand there was something of the wounded tigress in her passionate efforts and cries—

"Shame, coward! to do me this wrong," she exclaimed. "Is there no man among you all to strike him to the earth? Oh! that a look could blast you where you stand!"

The curtain was drawn, and a cry of despair, followed by sobs, burst from the Ranee.

Turning to the woman who held the wailing child, the Resident said—

"Take back the infant to her who owns it. Do you, who are her people, remove that woman hence. Let her go as she pleases with her ill-gotten gold, but I cannot permit her to deceive you. Know you this, all ye people who hear me. Three years ago, the woman who calls herself Ranee of Auripore came to the Rajah's Zenanah. From the date of her arrival she, by her spells, as you would say, bewitched the Rajah. When she had, by pandering to his miserable debaucheries, destroyed his intellect and ruined his body, she began the plot which I this day have brought to nought.

The "Auripore Case" furnished themes in the

Upper House to Lord Slapperton, to Mr. Straddles, Q.C., in the Lower House, and to the lawyers for a long time, as you all know. Mr. Desmond was denounced in parodies of Burke's and Sheridan's speeches against Warren Hastings. The Honourable Company was assailed with declamations, which it thought of considerable less weight than rupees. The end of it all was, that Auripore was finally annexed, and Desmond ruled bravely and wisely in the palace of the Rajah, or rather, in a very snug Residence of much greater comfort outside it. He ruled prosperously, too; he crushed rebellion; he made war, and he conquered; he annexed more States; he had rivals and enemies, but he sat solid and fixed in his place of power as one of the deities of the people, and they trembled at his name.

And now comes another part of my story, and a singular affair it was. It was one night in June—a night which had followed a day of intense heat. The wind blew in soughs—hot and choaking as though they were blasts blurted forth from a furnace. The Resident's bedroom opened on a verandah, a sentry paced to and fro in the garden below; and the punkahwallah, pulling his rope with machine-like regularity, sat close to the window. The Resident suddenly awoke—God knows why. It

was just in time. At his bedside stood a figure, draped in black, with upraised hand. Ere he could speak, a flash dazzled his eyes from a pistol so close to his head that the flame burnt his brow; but strong, prompt, and fearless, the Resident was on his legs in a moment, and grappling the assassin tore from his hand a dagger. In another instant he was struck to the ground by a heavy blow, but the report had aroused the Residency and the wretches fled. Instant search, headed by the Resident himself, was made, but it was to no effect.

Footsteps as of two persons—one with very small feet—were traced in the garden, but they were lost in the grass of the Compound. A violent storm baffled the pursuit, and we returned without any clue to the would-be murderers.

"It is very strange, you know, Fraser," said the Resident, as we were assembled in his room; "but I could almost swear it was a woman I was struggling with when I was knocked down. The punkahwallah and the Sepoy may be in it. However, let the matter rest now. It was a near thing for me. By-the-bye, let us see the dagger I took in the contest."

It lay on the table—a sharp stiletto-like blade,

with walrus-tooth handle, inlaid with gold. Fraser took up the weapon, and we all examined it curiously.

"It is a Kashmir dagger," said he. "Excellency, you had indeed a lucky escape. See! there is a groove full of poison, fresh and green; a scratch would probably have killed you."

"My life is in the hands of God, Fraser, as are all our lives; and if He willed me now to die by the dagger of an assassin, I could say, His will be done!"

It may be imagined there was a pretty stir made through the whole district, although the Resident was not at all concerned about it. There was a strict inquiry carried on by order of Government. Every one near the place was examined, but no light was thrown on the transaction.

Lall Bukh, punkahwallah, deposed "that he was working away at his rope, and listening to the distant thunder, when he heard a shot in the Resident's room, and cries for help. He saw something like a bear struggling with the Resident, and in another moment, as he was running to aid him, a thing like a tiger, with wings and fiery eyes, sprang out, nearly killed him, and vanished through the garden. He could say no more."

Sheik Munnoo, Sepoy, deposed "that he was on duty below the verandah, when suddenly he heard a shot and loud cries inside. He was running to the spot, when several figures leaped out into the garden, at one of which he fired, and to another gave a bayonet thrust, both without effect. He pursued, but lost sight of them all in the dark among the buildings of the Compound.

No one else knew anything whatever concerning the murderous attempt, and it remained an utter mystery who were concerned in it or how they managed to get inside the Residency, which was surrounded by lofty walls and was guarded by sentries within hail of each other; but of course there were suspicions that the Ranee had something to say to the affair, as she had sworn to have her revenge on Desmond. The strangest reports flew through the Bazaars. It was said that Fraser, whom I have mentioned, an officer of the Company's service, who had been in command of the late Rajah's contingent, and who was actually in charge of the native troops in the city at the time, had been for some period before the Rajah's death in intimate relations with this woman and knew all about her; indeed there were people who believed she was sheltered by his servants with his know-

ledge long after the annexation. Anyway, the friendship which had subsisted between him and Desmond cooled, and at last Fraser was removed to another district, but there, as elsewhere, he got into difficulties about money. Ere his wife died there had been already a great scandal about some native lady which caused much unhappiness in his home, and the Bazaars had it that it was this lady who afterwards became Ranee of Auripore, while others were of opinion, as Mr. Desmond I know was, that the Ranee was really a European adventuress, though we never could get at the truth.

Desmond, in fact, never wished to sift the matter to the bottom, but it was remarked that when Fraser, who had powerful interest which got him over endless scrapes, was sent off to the North West, he relaxed many precautions which had been instituted after the midnight outrage. No open rupture ever took place between them indeed, and to the last Mr. Desmond took the greatest interest in Fraser's little daughter, who was a beautiful child—wonderfully so indeed considering that her mother was very plain. To add to the interest created by her great beauty, there was a report going that Mrs. Fraser never could bear the child, and had become subject to a strange hallucination that it was not

her own, but that it had been changed at nurse: and in that belief the poor woman died.

"And where is this Fraser now?" inquired Lord Belbrook.

"He's yet in the Company's service, and had the raising of a regiment of irregulars which did good service in the last war and now goes by his name, but he is a sad fellow for getting into trouble. Don't you remember an affair in Dublin—a Colonel Fraser who was beaten coming out of Morris's gambling house? That was the very man. He has gone back to India, I hear, in a desperate state, and my sister, who knew poor Mrs. Fraser well, writes me word that the young lady has been taken by Sir Denis to live with him till better times have turned up, though he has no great liking for the father."

"And this woman was never discovered, you say? Could not the Government find out all about her in such a country as India, where money goes a long way. God bless me, Mr. Brady! you look ill! What is the matter?"

Muttering some excuse about the heat of the room, I rose from the table, apologized to the president of the mess for a little giddiness and tempo-

rary indisposition, and almost tottered rather than walked out into the corridor.

"Poor fellow!" whispered Mr. Casey to the Major as I left. "He lost his father in India, and his mother was drowned coming home with him from Calcutta. I suppose he can't bear to hear people talk of the place; no wonder."

The night air cooled my heated cheeks, but I felt as though my blood had turned to molten lead. Go where I might this woman was rising up by night and by day. This woman your mother! Have you a drop in your veins, Terence Brady, of such a nature as that? Better to die at once than live to walk the earth and to become some day the true son of such as her child must be. Where, oh where was this misery to end? Every year was revealing some new cause of fear and dislike. Hate, or a dread so wild that it was allied to hate, was taking the place of the tenderness and the boundless love which had once filled my very soul for her. What touches remained to be added to the picture which had driven forth the memories of the dream of my boyhood's devotion and idolatry?

I sought in vain to shut out the thoughts that would come unbidden. As the Major's story went

on I listened to him with a sickening apprehension; one word was more dreadful than the other. What to those around me was merely a curious little story about a man in whom they felt some languid curiosity, was to me a frightful revelation—a slough of despair. Tears did not relieve me, though God knows they came welling from my hot eyes like lava.

The conviction had grown on my mind that the woman associated with Fraser was the same as she who had blighted my father's prospects, ruined his career, embittered the last years of my grandfather's life, who had suddenly seized on a dreadful calamity with such dexterity and feline swiftness to turn it to her advantage in the scheme she was meditating to desert her child for her unholy passion or caprice, and who now was standing at the secret tribunal within my breast, accused by her son of dreadful crimes. For with a revulsion of feeling which had been coming on slowly and laboriously, bearing against the strong barriers of my natural affection, till they burst beneath accumulating pressure, I arrived at the conclusion that the false Ranee of Auripore—the woman who had ruined this wretched Rajah and quickened his death—the woman who had placed the pistol to the head of the

sleeping Resident—the evil genius of my existence—was no other than the glittering heartless girl who had fascinated my father, who had maddened her husband, had abandoned her child, and had of her own free will finally sought a career in the vile intrigues of the Zenanah, without a future or a friend. You will see hereafter how far my conclusions were justified.

CHAPTER XIV.

WELCOME TO KILMOYLE.

It was on a fine May day, more than a year after our arrival in Ireland, that the roll of our drums, coming nearer and nearer, roused the town of Kilmoyle to more than normal activity.

"The army is coming! Here are the soldiers, Kitty, darlin'! Run, boys! Hurry up, alannah!"

The whole population, deserting business, such as it was, flocked towards the bridge to gaze on a sight which, possessing attractions for most folk, is perfectly irresistible to an Irish crowd. It was market-day. Streams of the peasantry flowed in contending currents through the main street, which long drawn out ended promiscuously in a grand flourish of mud-hovels, striving with might and main to render themselves distinguishable from the wide expanse of bog, over which they peered with an ostentatious pretence of roof and doorway. Above

the hum of many voices in sale and bargain, and the strains of ballad-singers, rose the tumult of pigs, the clangour of geese and the lowing of cattle, mingled with the shrill adjurations of professional beggars, and the cries for charity of cripples and "objects" of all kinds, who seem to spring out of the ground on such occasions in the Green Isle. Peasants' carts, laden with flour, butter; and mounds of women and children, formed little islands in the thoroughfare, or drawn up in files by the rugged border of stone which did duty as a *pavé*, compressed the crowd in the narrow street. The ford of the river below the bridge was thronged by peasant girls, preparing for the ordeal of shoes and stockings, in which they were going to enter the town in due form, stumping over the old hump-backed arches which had felt the tramp of St. Ruth's Frenchmen and the march of De Ginkel's veteran Dutch. The men, taking off their swallow-tailed coats, hung them over their shoulders, across the universal blackthorn, from which the garments floated like pennons significant of battle. The general effect of the scene produced an impression that a nomad race on their pilgrimage to an unknown land were passing through the town. Indeed, most of them could have moved off as they

stood, walked to the ends of the earth, and left nothing behind them. In the space formed by the Market House on one side, the Court House and a line of small shops on the other, were the booths and stalls of itinerant dealers in cakes, calico, coloured wood engravings of the worst possible style, haberdashery, clothing, and cheap finery—the precipitate out of the troubled waters of petty commerce all over the world which settles down in Ireland. The sun, flashing from the mica and window-panes, shone on a proud pile of granite—a castle-like edifice enclosed by a high wall. It was indeed the Castle of Indolence, within which, pent up in discontent and sloth, some hundreds of paupers, out of many miserable thousands equally needy outside, sought refuge from want and death. On the bank of the river lower down, surrounded by a still higher wall, towered aloft in its solid magnificence the County Gaol. Nearer the bridge, a substantial whitewashed house, protected by walls of masonry, faced the high road, offering a strong contrast in its regular outlines and comfortable appearance to the cabins which formed a squalid suburb. It was the Police Barrack. Just over the belt of trees which marked the course of the Carra, through the rich meadows, were visible the chimneys of Kilmoyle Castle. Two or three

mansions of less pretensions, each nestled in its own wood, dotted the rolling hills, which circled the flat moor speckled with dark mounds of peat. My pulse quickened as I made out the grove that hid Lough-na-Carra from my eager eyes. Down the road, half hidden in the dust which arose beneath their tread, appeared our column of infantry, preceded by the mounted officers, of which I, Terence Brady, was one, and by the drummers and fifers who were drumming and fifing away their loudest and shrillest in the quick march of "The Royal Bengal Tigers." The bayonets glistening in the sun, the life and motion of the scarlet line as it twined along the road in and out of the light grey cloud which ascended from the beat of many feet, the flashing of accoutrements, were delightful to the beholders, but afforded no pleasure to us thirsty warriors who, hot and fagged, had left Athlone in the early morning. It was not agreeable to be bandied about as we had been lately, to aid the constabulary in keeping the peace, as if that could be kept which was always broken. The old soldiers from India, and the young soldiers who had not long left the depôt of the regiment, were in no very genial mood as they strode over the bridge, although the beauty and fashion of

Kilmoyle, and all the townsfolk and county visitors, had flocked there to gaze upon them.

"It's worse than Fuzzypore that was all mud, mosques, and monkeys!" said one.

"Well! I thought it was hard to beat our last billet, at Ballynapogue," grumbled another; "but I'd give a pint to get back there this minit."

"Murphy, show us your dadda's mansion and grounds, will you?"

"There it is, Jack, just beyont the church there in the wood; but Sir Dinis is keeping us out of it."

"I've only seen one decent-looking girl in the whole pack of them—such a lot of thick-shanked ugly devils I haven't laid eyes on since we left the Hottentot Venuses."

As the drums and fifes marched on, the listeners kept pace with them to the gates of the half-ruined barrack, which had been prepared for the reception of the novel visitors; Kilmoyle had gone out of date as a military station ever since the time of '98, when it was the head-quarters of the Kilmoyle Yeomanry, whose standing toast on their "dinner nights" was—"Here's to the Kilmoyle Light Horse—the Terror of Bonaparte!" The band rolled and squeaked its last ruffle and strain,

Major Bagshaw, reining in his horse, gave orders to keep out the crowd, which would fain have followed the head of the column into the enclosure, and became unpopular on the spot. The companies wheeled into line along the parade-ground—the Major and I dismounted, and the men stood eyes front, as Bagshaw walked down the line with the air of a man who has a solemn duty to perform in finding fault with something or other, and yet is rather puzzled to execute it. Not that the Major was a querulous or ill-conditioned person. He was one of those meritorious officers who cannot believe they are doing their duty unless they are making their authority felt some way or another among their men, simply because they think they understand the Queen's Regulations, and do not understand human nature. If duty was to be performed at all, it could only be done, he thought, in consequence of a direct order for each particular act; and it was almost disobedience in his eyes for a man to pretend to do anything unless he were told to do it, as it certainly was the sum of human wickedness to do more or less than the exact thing ordered.

"Captain Savage," quoth the Major, "there was a great deal too much talking in the company as it came into the town."

Captain Savage was a centurion who had risen from the ranks, and had borne all the evils of his unhappy elevation with much fortitude, living ever in the hope that if any one must die in the regiment, it might be a Major for choice; not that he disliked majors in the abstract, but that he desired to be a major in the concrete, to sell, and retire, with or without Mrs. Savage, to a small Channel Island. He stood at attention, as if he were a ranker once more, murmured some mild acknowledgment of the rebuke into his stock, and scowled at his serjeant, who looked in his turn fiercely along the line with an eye which shot its arrows right into the rear rank. The subalterns, Wilmot and Nash, exchanged a glance from flank to flank, which, in plain rendering, meant—"Don't you think it's rather fun for old Bagshaw to drop on old Savage?" They agreed it was with the same look. The Major passed on, and had just reached the second man of the next company, when he started perceptibly, drew himself up stiffly, and then, pointing with his finger in a menacing manner to a private, exclaimed, in solemn and awe-inspiring tones—

"Captain Desmond, what is the matter with that man?"

The officer thus addressed arched his brows with

a look of curiosity, and examined the object suggested by the Major's digit with profound attention. The "object" was a thin, muscular, sunburnt swarthy soldier, with coarse black hair and stubbly whiskers. Standing bolt upright, with every finger and thumb in its proper place, his toes, knees, hands, and arms all according to regulation, and staring right before him at the Major's finger, the unhappy private presented an appearance of soldierly exactness and regulation rigidity with which it was hard to find fault.

"The man? That man, Major Bagshaw!" said Captain Desmond, after a leisurely survey. "I see nothing wrong about him."

"Nothing wrong, sir! Good Heavens!" exclaimed the Major, in a voice of expostulation, half broken with emotion. "Do, *pray*, Captain Desmond, look at that!"

Taking a step nearer to the culprit, with outstretched arm he put his forefinger, in front of the neck, on the junction of the collar of the coatee, which had become unhooked, and through the narrow rift in which an accustomed eye might observe that the stiff black stock had somewhat relaxed in its grasp of the windpipe, and from imperfect buckling stood out so as to leave a section of

brawny, brown throat visible. Then turning slowly round, with a look which plainly expressed his opinion of the offence, the Major repeated, with much gravity—

"Pray look at that, Captain Desmond—look at that!"

"Yes, sir, I see. The man had sun-stroke in India, and, I suppose, eased off his stock; but when I inspected the company this morning he was all right. It shall be seen to."

The Major waved his hand and passed on; but so happy was he in having detected the criminal neglect, that he condoned several irregularities of greater consequence in the rest of his inspection. After a while, the imposing ceremony was over, the dismiss was called, and the men proceeded to their new quarters. Although damages had been rigidly exacted from the last tenants, and every nail-hole duly counted and paid for, the apartments assigned to the field-officer, his captains and subalterns, were by no means of a magnificent character or even strictly comfortable. Bare walls, stained doors, carpetless floors, and rusty grates—all had a look of desolation which only an Arab of the desert, or a British officer, can understand. Whilst we were engaged in mapping out chambers,

and fixing the sites for bedstead, portable chair, portmanteau, and favourite portrait, the rumble of a carriage summoned many heads to the windows. The soldiers in the room above me, already in shirt-sleeves and forage-caps, with pipes in their mouths, were staring at the vehicle, which drew up outside my window.

"Isn't she an elegant girl,—the tall one with the dark hair, I mean?"

"Hush, boys! maybe they'd hear us. That's Sir Denis that's with them, I'm sure—the captain's uncle—him whose house I showed you through the trees nigh hand the church; and that's his niece, Miss Butler—the other one I niver seen afore."

"Faith, and she's not bad either! What fine fair hair she has, and she's full of fun. Oh! faith, they're looking! Draw back!—there's the captain!"

My heart was beating a double tattoo. What was I doing? Rushing out to greet the welcome visitors? No! Looking out of the window? No. Peeping, at all events, at my old friend? No, I dared not look; I could not peep. The fact was, I was in a false—a particularly false position. My room was on the ground floor, and was nearly

level with the parade. There was no blind to the window; and, although a person outside could not see right down to the floor, a few feet more elevation gave a complete command of the apartment except at a small angle beside the window, close to the wall. As ill luck would have it, I had ordered "a tub," and I was enjoying the refreshing splashes of the Carra water, after my hot and dusty ride, in the bath-corner, where my servant had laid down a piece of oilcloth, when I was surprised by the roll of the carriage wheels. Ere I could dart across the room to the side where my clothes were piled up on a chair near the door, to my horror, two bonnets rose high above the window-sill — the Castle coachman towered aloft—the great carriage horses could almost have laid their noses on me, had they put in their necks through the open window! As long as I kept recumbent in my tub in the corner, I was safe, but if I moved I was in full view of the occupants of the carriage. It was a very unpleasant—a very ridiculous—position; but, although many ideas flashed through my brain, such as throwing a wet towel at the coachman, and splashing water in the horses' faces, I dared not execute any of them, and to this moment, I have never decided on the

proper course under all the circumstances. I could see Sir Denis's hat, and the feathers and ribands in the bonnets made me cringe again as they nodded and fluttered close to the window. The voices sounded in my very ear. I was aware that Captain Desmond had come to the carriage.

"When you have quite satisfied Mary that you have the stronger hand of the two," breaks out Sir Denis, "perhaps you will be good enough to let me welcome you!"

"My dear uncle! You, a *preux chevalier*, can never find fault with me for paying my duty to my fair cousin!"

(Gerald Desmond was rather a prig.)

They shook hands. I could see their heads wagging. Captain Desmond's voice again—

"And you too, uncle—'pon my honour, you are younger than ever."

"Well, I can't wonder at your thinking so if you see my looks reflected in the face you are looking at," said Sir Denis. "Mary, my dear! you have quite forgotten to present your cousin Gerald to your friend and mine."

"Captain Desmond is so nervous, uncle; I was waiting for him to recover himself," replied Mary.

"Cousin, let me introduce you to Miss Mabel Fraser, whom we of her familiars are allowed to call Mab! That is a long way off for you yet."

Captain Desmond, I am sure, made a bow, and said—

"I am charmed to be allowed to speak to Miss Fraser at all!"

"And now, Gerald, I want to know the commanding officer, and the girls of course would like to see all the young fellows. You must come over to dinner to-night, and you, Gerald, will stop at the Castle afterwards if you can. We'll try and get up a dance as soon as possible, but there's scarce a soul left in the county, as the boys have been making themselves very agreeable to resident landlords lately. What kind of a man is your major, and how do you like being *numeroté* in the line?"

"Well, uncle, they're not a bad set of fellows, take them all in all. Bagshaw, the major, is a pompous old muff, but a good soldier; Savage, the senior captain here—mind this, Cousin Mary, and no trifling with young affections!—is nearer fifty than forty. Mrs. Savage and two columns of her infantry are moving with the baggage train. Harcourt, a son of the Brandy Harcourt you knew in former days in India, is a capital fellow. So is Potts. As to

the subs., they are like all subs.—some are merry and wise, and some are wise and not merry, and some neither. They are black, brown, and white—tall and short, fat and lean! They'll all be trotted out at the Castle for the inspection of cousin Mary, Miss Fraser, and the ladies of Leitrim, and you can judge for yourselves."

"And where's Terence? Where is my old friend and playmate, Terence Brady?" asked that angel voice. (Oh! Terry, Terry! don't splash the water!) "I so long to see him back among us all again!" (God bless you, Mary dear, for the words!) "It's strange he has not been out to see us." (How could I? Who can come out if you wont let a man get at his clothes?) "I fully expected he would have been the first to welcome us."

"Oh! Brady? the doctor? Yes, to be sure! I can't imagine why he hasn't made his bow, as he has nothing to do. I forgot, for a moment, you and he were old friends; but, though I'm bound to hunt out old Bagshaw for you, the doctor must really be responsible for himself. Excuse me for a moment; I'm off to find the Major."

"Stay, Gerald," said his uncle; "I will go with you. The girls wont mind staying in the carriage

for a moment—particularly as they are surrounded by gallant admirers aloft there," he added, looking up at a couple of windows from which knots of officers' heads were visible. "It is only right for me to call on Major Bagshaw first, and not ask him to come down to me."

"Always right in form and matter, Sir Denis," replied Captain Desmond. "We'll leave the ladies to criticize Nash, Wilmot, Everest, and Boyle, who have been taking a good peep for the last ten minutes."

Sir Denis and his nephew walked across the barrack-yard to the senior officer's quarters. The ladies sat silent for a moment.

"Mab, why did you give my hand a squeeze just now?" asked Miss Butler.

"I, Mary dear!—a squeeze! When?" replied Miss Fraser, with a little tremor in her voice. "I am sure I was not aware of it."

"Why, your hand is trembling now as you speak, Mab; and as to squeezing, I really thought it was cousin Gerald's great paw for the moment."

I listened! for my life I could not help it.

"If this happened when Gerald appeared, I should have fancied it was a case of love at first sight. Are you well, Mab dear?—you are trembling still."

"It is only a little nervousness—all these men staring at us, perhaps," replied Miss Fraser. "It will go off presently."

"Before dinner hour, I hope, at all events, my child," said Miss Butler, affectionately. "And now, what do you think of him?"

"Of whom, Mary?"

"Of whom, Mab? How provoking you are. Don't you know?—I can only mean *mon beau* cousin."

"Well, Mary dear, he is indeed *bel et beau*—splendid eyes, fine hair, wonderful teeth, and graceful manner. Is his nose Roman, or Grecian, or what is it?"

I did not catch Miss Butler's reply. Whether Mabel Fraser knew that I was there, within a few feet of her, crouching down like a beaten hound, with my face pressed against the wall, and my hands quivering as they pressed back my hair from my ears, so that they might drink in every word, I cannot tell; but, in my excitement, when they were speaking of me, I had leant over till I could look above the sill, and for a glint—the fragment of a second—her eye, I fancied, caught mine. She started at all events, and then I could only judge by the words I heard what effect the

sudden apparition had had upon her. And yet she must have been prepared for my coming! I had heard she was at the Castle, and I asked myself, in the name of all that is wonderful, what was Mabel Fraser doing here? Where was her father? What part was she—was he—playing now?—what meshes were they weaving round my darling? Justly or not, I had become full of suspicion as to the purpose and character of Mabel Fraser. Oh, Heaven, give me patience and fortitude! Watch and be still! There is—there can be—no hope for you; but at least you can live to serve her. What are they saying now? I cannot hear. Mary's voice has sunk to a whisper. Now she speaks:

"Here they come, Mab. My uncle is escorting the redoubtable Bagshaw, who has several smaller agas in attendance on him; and here is great Gerald the lady-killer; but I don't see Terence Brady. Mab, prepare to receive infantry!"

The carriage drew a few feet ahead from the window.

At that moment there was a knock at my door, and I crawled away on my hands and feet across the room to get at my coat and the rest of the clothing which a man should put on who is only in slippers and towelling.

The head of Mr. Stubbs, the Major's boreman, appeared.

"The Major sent me to say, sir, he would thank you to come round as soon as you can, as he wants to introduce all the officers to Sir Denis Desmond and the family before they dine at the Castle this evening."

"I know—that is—all right! Say I'll be round presently." How I got into my uniform I know not. The barrack-yard seemed to swim round as I walked towards the carriage, now the centre of a circle composed of every available officer and the object of every disengaged eye. All the young men were chatting and laughing in a most heartless way as I approached.

"Oh," interrupted Major Bagshaw, catching a glimpse of me, and drawing himself up in his grand manner, "Sir Denis, another of my officers; Miss Butler, allow me to present to you——"

To the Major's great surprise, Miss Butler, cut his introduction short. Holding out both hands, she exclaimed "And here you are at last, Terence! Oh, I am so glad to see you, and in this old place again! Uncle, this is our old friend, Mr. Brady, of whom I must ask pardon for calling him Terence just now." (If she knew how the little word had

shot through me like a flame!) "You know all about him and his people. Welcome to Kilmoyle once more!"

Sir Denis took my hand kindly, and looked into my face with his hard grey eyes. "Mr. Brady, I knew your father, and I have heard much of you," he said. "The longest thing I can remember is my farewell visit to Lough-na-Carra to your grandfather, when he told me I must come back a nabob. But stay, my niece has forgotten to introduce you to Miss Fraser. Mabel, let me present to you Mr. Terence Brady."

Miss Fraser never raised her eyes as she bowed; her lips murmured something, and I stammered out—

"I have had the pleasure of meeting Miss Fraser before."

"What! You haven't been in India, have you? Oh, I forgot, Mabel, that you were with—with your father—when that affair took place," remarked Sir Denis. "You met in Dublin, I suppose?"

"Yes, in Dublin, sir."

"And here was Mab keeping all this to herself!" ejaculated Mary. "Never to tell me that you knew my old friend and playmate Terence, of Lough-na-Carra, Mab! It was too bad."

Miss Fraser seemed ill at ease. She said, gently, "I think I only saw Mr. Brady once—or twice was it? He dined with us on the night papa was so dreadfully injured; I'm sure he will feel it is a painful recollection—at least it is for me."

Sir Denis's eyes were fixed on me still. He had a manner, I found, of fixing his gaze on one for a long time. Bagshaw and his young men were rather put out at finding "the Pill" such a prominent person. Gerald, who was absent when I joined the group, made his appearance. "So here is your friend at last. I have made it right with Captain Savage, sir, if you approve. He will take my duty."

The Major was affable. He looked forward to frequent visits at the Castle, where cook and cellar were good, and he had heard the woodcock were plentiful in the season too.

"I advise you, Mr. Brady, to slip round to us as quietly as you can," said Sir Denis, "for I'm told the tenants, the people who remember your grandfather and old times at Lough-na-Carra, intend to draw you in triumph up the Castle avenue."

"Oh, doctor, do let yourself be dragged in triumph! It would be tremendous fun, uncle, I think," drawled Gerald. "It would make us all

feel so deuced small too; and the only compensation we could give ourselves would be to order the band to play us from this to the Castle."

"The people are greatly attached to Mr. Brady's family," said Miss Butler, gravely; "but I am sure they will just do whatever he pleases."

There was a pause. Gerald leant his arms on the carriage and looked at the young ladies without speaking. Major Bagshaw examined the arms on the panel, and tapped his brass spurs together; the agas got from one uneasy attitude into another, till Sir Denis sounded the dismiss by taking out his watch. "I had no idea it was so late. Mary, just call round by the Careys and ask the girls over, and persuade the Lawlers, minus the two maiden aunts, to come, if you can. Thomas, drive to Kilmoyle Court and round by Drishane, and call back for me at the magistrates' office."

Major Bagshaw effected a military salute of great dignity—the agas in degree, each after his kind, threw off an adieu—the impudent Gerald kissed hands, and as the carriage rolled out of the barrack-gate, Sir Denis and his nephew and I were left standing alone.

"Uncle," quoth Captain Gerald, "she is certainly a beautiful girl."

"Well, upon my word, I'm glad you have made up your mind on that point. Mary will be greatly flattered."

"Oh! Mary, of course.—But I mean the other—that is," said Captain Desmond, a little embarrassed, "I think she is a most charming person, that Miss Fraser. Tell me all about her."

"You'll hear soon enough," said Sir Denis, drily. "We shall see you at seven. I will send whatever horses I can spare for you all, and I think there will be carriage room for the whole party."

Gerald gazed after his uncle. "A very tough old person," he observed. "They say India tries a fellow; just look at him! I'd back his life against mine to-morrow. I'll put myself under your wing, and we'll go together to this ridiculous old Castle, doctor, which I am anxious to see, at any rate, ere it be annexed by some Irish chieftain. I can just remember the big staircase, an old picture gallery, and a broken pane of glass in my bedroom, which I dare say I could find still in statu quo, if I had a ramble over the premises."

CHAPTER XV.

THE CASTLE DINNER.

WHAT a change a few years had made in Kilmoyle! Never very prosperous, it seemed to have fallen into the last extremity of wretchedness. The fair was over, and all that remained of it was here and there a country cart in the street outside a public-house, or a late pig going home in charge of its new owner, and perhaps more customers than usual in the shebeens. I put on a shooting jacket, and went out of the barrack unobserved, noting the evidences of decay, and recalling the old times when Kilmoyle seemed to me the centre of civilized life. Rafferty's great establishment, where I was wont to purchase the stirring battle-scenes and the card-soldiers, which I coloured to my heart's content with gamboge and carmine,—had disappeared. That was indeed a shock to the sensibilities. The house had been altered, and the large window built up, and in the space wherein had once been displayed

treasures in endless profusion—toys, prints, paint-boxes, fishing-rods, guns, Manchester goods, confectionery, bonnets, scythes, hats, books, grocery, pickles, stationery—an assortment, in fact, which made "Rafferty's Emporium" a sort of sample repertory for all the trades and manufactures—were "Notices" from the "Board of Works," and the "Board of Poor Laws," and "Emigration Commissioners," and "Rewards" for criminals, and serious literature headed "Proclamation, Dublin Castle," and ending "God save the Queen." The "Desmond Arms" had degenerated into "Lodgins and entertainment for man and Beast." The old coach days were over, the branch railway to Knockdown had given Kilmoyle a wide berth, and the Board of Works had constructed a road which carried away all that had been left of the traffic. But for a galvanic touch from the fair or the market, and an occasional visit from an Inspector of something or other, Kilmoyle would have died out of mere lethargy. I could not resist going into the old house—the landlady I knew had been gathered to her people across the ocean; she had gone off to her sons in America when the famine broke out. But the bar-room was still there; the glass-window had generally become opaque from brown paper,

yet I could still see the old engraving of the "Right Honourable the Earl of Belbrook, Master of the Kilmoyle Hunt," facing the portrait of "Sir John Desmond, M.P., delivering his famous speech in the Irish House of Commons, in 1782;" and the fox in the glass-case over the fireplace, which looked perfectly capable of giving a repetition of the immortal run, which finished more than half the countyside, and secured him the honour of being stuffed and housed. There, too, on the opposite wall was the monster trout, "killed by Richard Butler, Esquire, on a midge below Carra Bridge, 10th June, 1819," struggling to keep itself together; and there were the natural history collections made by the landlord—a gamekeeper on the Desmond estates—the horned owl, the bittern, the large diver, the solitary snipe, the mottled woodcock, and polecats, and weasels, which rendered a visit to the little parlour one of the delights of my childhood.

There were some men drinking at the table, who rose as I entered, because I had a better coat on my back, and "might be" somebody who had power in the land. They sat down at my request, and eyed me in silence with that shy, curious, inquiring, half-frightened look one must have seen to be able to describe. The landlady—how dif-

ferent from my dear trim Mrs. Dempsey of old; her clean mob-cap, her handsome features and tidy buxom figure—inquired "What my honour would like to taste?" and was much relieved when she found I aspired no higher than a glass of "cordial."

"Maybe, your honner," said one of the men at the table, after looking at me for some time, "is a sthranger in these parts?"

"Not quite," I replied. "I have been here before."

"Faith, your honner, I'm surprised you ever came back to it. There's few that can lave Kilmoyle ever come back to it again."

"Ah, thin, you're talkin' to the gentleman as if he was one of us," observed a gnarled, obsequious old man next him. "Don't you see he's one of the quality, Maguire?"

"I'm nothing of the kind," said I. "I have just to do as I am bid, and to go where I'm sent, and to earn my bread by doing my duty."

"Maybe," inquired the first speaker, more familiarly, "you are belongin' to some of them up at the Castle beyont?"

"No; I belong to nobody, my good man. I am merely a visitor here, though I am likely to stay

here for some time. And now, let me ask you a question or two."

Silence, and suspicion, and uneasiness again.

"You need not be afraid," I continued. "I'm not a sub-inspector, or a revenue officer, or a county surveyor, or a land agent. I am just a poor gentleman belonging to a family which once lived in this county, and I should like to ask you, if you belong to the neighbourhood, a question or two about the friends of my father's family."

"Would your honner tell us the name you have, that we might know who we're spakin' to? Ould Pether Phelan there knows most of the raal families about here—"

"Not yet, my man—all in good time. Can any of you tell me what has become of an old college friend of mine, Mr. Maurice Prendergast?"

There was a quick glance of intelligence—almost of alarm—exchanged between the men.

"Mr. Maurice Prendergast!" exclaimed Phelan, doubtingly. "Ah! thin I think I hard tell of the name before. It's not Mr. Maurice, of Carra-Linn, you mane? Him that went to the bad wid the Young Ireland boys, and bad 'cess to them?"

"The very same."

"I'm thinking, Maguire," said Peter Phelan, after

a pause, "I read it in the papers that he escaped off to the States wid some of the others."

"And where is his sister?"

"Ho! ho!" exclaimed Maguire; "and your honner knows Mr. Maurice had a sisther—God purtect her, the darlin', this day and every day, amin! An' indeed, an' indeed, your honner, if we could have kept her among us we would; but she's goin' out to Amerikey to join her brother. She's still at the ould house, but the place is to be sould; there 'll soon be some upstart dhrivin' the people off the land; and the Prendergasts, that held up their heads wid the proudest Desmonds, or Butlers, or Carews, will be workin' among sthrangers for their bread in a sthrange land. It's mighty quare how God Almighty lets such things go on."

"They're not as bad as the Bradys, of Lough-na-Carra, any way," remarked Peter. "They say the ould place must be put up for sale soon, and that the docthor's grandson—Lord be good to him!—is about to go off to Ingy, as a poor bone-setther in a ridgment—that's what *I* hear, any way."

"But the Prendergasts always stood up for the rights of the people."

"And so did the Bradys!" interrupted Phelan.

"Shew me a man that was ever kinder to the poor, or a better magistrate than the ould doctor."

"Oh aye! that's thrue enough. But thin they wern't of the ould faith. An' it's myself heard young Brady was one of thim that informed against Mr. Maurice when he was in thrubble."

"The Bradys never were given that way, Mat Maguire, and it's I that knows it's false," said the third man at the table, who had not yet spoken. "I heard from them that ought to know, Mr. Maurice told his sister young Brady saved his life."

"And doesn't the whole county know," shouted Maguire, "young Brady stood second to that Orangeman who hit Mr. Maurice, in the jewel?"

"And why not, if he was his frend—and they fought fair?"

"It may save your disputing the point," said I, "if I tell you, that Mr. Prendergast and Mr. Brady, though they did not agree in politics, parted good friends, and Mr. Brady sheltered him when he was pursued by the police. I know it, as I was in Dublin at the time."

"Oh! That may be thin. But, for all that, there's no comparing the Prendergasts with the Bradys, ay, or Desmonds either, and that man up at the Castle may find it's true some day."

"Isn't," I asked, "Sir Denis Desmond liked?"

The look on the man's face was answer enough.

"Liked!" he repeated; "to be sure he is by them whose work he does with us. Just as much as he was in Ingy."

"Sir Denis bears the name of being a just and a good man. He is one Ireland ought to be proud of. Why isn't he liked?"

"Well thin, sir, I'll tell you. Because he has no heart. He's got his rights, and his laws, and his agents, and his attorneys, and there's nothing but processes and summonses goin' on agin us! And who dare say a word agin him? Bedad, there'll soon be very few left to do it, unless the sheep take to baahing at him. I don't think his life 'ud be safe from some bad members we've got in the country, but Mr. Maurice wrote to say he'd never set foot in the land agin if there was a hair of his head touched—and that there's not a man, woman, or child, far and near, would not die for Miss Mary, God bless her!"

"Come back again? And do you expect Mr. Prendergast back?"

"In the Lord's good time, your honner—and not long, we hope—"

The man who had spoken only once before

raised his hand quickly, he put his glass to his lips, looked closely at me as he rose, and said,

"It will be a fine night, I'm thinking——"

The two other men watched me as he spoke,—and paused; he continued. "I'll bid you good-bye, boys; I'm on my way home, and I've a long way to go yet." And, taking up his hat and stick, he went out of the house with a "Good evenin', your honner."

I passed out by the narrow hall in which Maurice and I stood long ago waiting for the Sligo mail—upstairs was the room in which my poor grandfather had his first interview when Jacko and Mohun and I arrived in Kilmoyle. I stepped into the street, and, striking out at a rapid pace, took the well-known road to Lough-na-Carra.

Alas! Even nature herself had felt the hand of time. Well-known wooded knolls were sought for in vain; trees had been cut, hedgerows levelled; cabins had been thrown down, walls had been removed, and where there was in my youth a narrow lane, like the course of a torrent filled with stones and small boulders, there was a broad road, in which the grass was growing in patches and encroaching on the wheel-tracks.

I came to the old Lodge at last; the iron gate

was open—indeed there would have been little use in closing it, as most of the bars had gone and the lock was broken; the Lodge was deserted, the windows fastened up with moss-covered boards, the roof heavy with weeds. The old oak trees which lined the avenue to the house, had disappeared; the lawn had been turned into arable, save a patch of pasturage for cows and sheep, well rooted up by pigs. The cattle and the sheep, however, were no longer there, but the meadow was trampled into muddy patches near the lake, and the grass was cropped short wherever the weeds were not too rank for food.

Not a soul was to be seen. I passed on towards the house, the dear old familiar house which I thought would be to me like a well-known friend waiting to welcome me at the end of a long journey. Alas! there was no welcome in that dull, dead look. All was in decay. There was an air of want and desolation on the very walls—the woodwork called aloud for a coat of paint to keep it from the jarring weather—in the joinings of the masonry sprouted bright green shoots, which had their roots in the moisture that streaked the stones—the eaves were broken, and gave harbour to the birds, which let straws and feathers flaunt from their nests; the

windows were covered with a grey mist, which spoke of uninhabited rooms or lazy housemaids. The door was open; and after a little pause on the threshold, such as one makes ere he plunges into some pool where he has bathed in the olden time, mindful of the ancient surety of the depths, but thinking of the changes that years may have made in the watery recesses, I passed into the hall. I had scarcely glanced round the well-remembered walls, when the door of the parlour opened; Mary Butler, with a little basket on her arm, accompanied by a girl of her own age, stood in the old hall before me.

I cannot tell what passed through my head, or why I almost turned to fly. Mary Butler was somehow above surprises, and took all the events of the day just as they came, in the most easy, natural way in the world.

"And so you have come back to the dear old house," said she, holding out her hand. "Ah, how changed you will find it all! You know Miss Prendergast? No! Not your friend Maurice Prendergast's sister? Let me introduce you, then. Miss Prendergast—Mr. Terence Brady!"

She was a dark-haired, grave young person, with grey eyes and heavy eyelashes, and fine delicate

features—tall, slight, and fragile, with a certain air of Maurice about her. She was dressed in deep mourning, with a broad white collar and deep cuffs, which gave her an air of a sister of charity; and she made me a low curtsey, the like of which I have never seen in my life, though I learnt afterwards it was the mode among the young ladies of the Convent of the "Sacré Cœur" of Angers. But as our eyes met a slight flush rose to her cheek, and I felt she knew all about me.

"We have been to see poor Mrs. Considine," continued Miss Butler; "your tenant, you know—for Miss Prendergast sometimes lets me join in her good works."

Miss Prendergast made a deprecating gesture, and said softly, "Dear Miss Butler! *Your* good works!"

"Would you like to see Mrs. Considine? She is very weak, you must know, but is full of energy; and if I let you leave the house without presenting you in your own hall, she would be angry with us. Would she not, Rose?"

"No," I exclaimed. "Let me not see more suffering in this unlucky house, I beg of you. I came here just out of curiosity: sauntered up the

avenue—came nearer and nearer—saw the door was open—entered, and here I am. I have seen enough, and will wait to make the acquaintance of my tenant, as you call her, some other time."

We turned out of the hall into the old drive, and there were I and Mary Butler walking down the old grass-covered walk as we had done in times gone by, with Maurice Prendergast's sister at my side. We walked in silence till we came to the Lodge; a tax-cart, with a page at the horse's head, was standing in the road.

"Now, Rose, as you are so obstinate, I am going to leave you at home, and Mr. Brady must walk back as he came—I daresay to his great content, as he certainly has not encouraged us to interrupt his meditations. As we came along, I daresay you thought as much of old times as I did; you can tell me when we meet at dinner. Good-bye; you have only two hours to dispose of till we meet."

And she rattled away in the tax-cart, with Miss Prendergast by her side, and the small boy perched up behind.

I was looking after the two young girls, and making an immense number of fine speeches to them

both—to myself; for I am and was a perfect repertory of *mots d'escalier*—when I was aware of the presence of a man who seemed to have got out of the hedge on the road-side, and who was coming towards me. I recognised the third man at the table of the "Desmond Arms," and I replied to his salutation by a "Good night, my man," in anticipation of the darkness, yet two hours distant. I was passing on, when he raised his hat, and said—

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Brady, but I thought I couldn't be mistaken when I saw you in the inn to-day, and I've made sure of it since. Shure and I'm ould Dan's son, the Lough-na-Carra fisherman, you know, and proud he'll be to see your honner once more."

"Oh, Dan! good old Dan! Tell him to come to me to-morrow. I shall be delighted indeed to see your father."

"Ah, sir," said the man, "it's asy to say come, but the poor ould man couldn't stir unless the saints cured his rumatiz; the wet and could has crippled him entirely. But maybe your honner could find time some day to come up to Coolbawn, and you'd do him more good than all the docthors in college."

I made a promise to go some day, and was

about to continue my walk towards Kilmoyle, when the man, with upraised hat, stopped me, and said significantly—

"You were wishing to hear of Misther Maurice? Miss Rose passed you just now, wid darlin' Miss Butler. Isn't she a darlin', sir? Maybe, when your honner comes to see the ould man, I'll be able to tell you something of Mr. Maurice. Oh, God knows he's hard set this blessed day! Good night and long life, sir, as you're going to dine at the Castle. It's good news I'll have for the ould man. God bless you, sir!" And so went his way.

Although I ought to have been to the manner born, I really knew very little of my countrymen—of the race which of all others requires a special knowledge and which needs a more exact application of that science of "knowing the people"—that avails so much in government and in social politics, and is so different from "knowing the world" or "mankind"—than any on earth. It struck me with wonder that this man should be aware that I was Terence Brady, that he should be so sure I was going to dine at the Castle, that he should dive so deep as he seemed to do into my secret when he spoke of Mary Butler; but Mr. Macarthy had been taking a little walk about the barracks, and at that time was acquainted with

as much of the history of each officer as was revealed by his name and by his servant's experience of his master's family connexions and circumstances. When I reached the barracks it was time to dress for dinner, but I had some difficulty to escape the crowd of Lough-na-Carra folk who came to welcome the good old doctor's grandson to Kilmoyle. Some old servants whom I remembered as boys and girls crept out of their hovels, anxious to show me their little children—to see how I had grown, and to talk to "the young master" whose heritage was small indeed; and as I emerged from the hand-shakings and reverences of the little crowd, and passed into the court-yard, under a volley of "God bless your honner, Masther Terence!" I was bantered by the young gentlemen on the subject of my very numerous and select acquaintance. As Gerald Desmond was driving over to the Castle, I hoped every moment he would say something about Mary Butler, but he only mentioned her once, and that in a careless, indifferent way, which made me angry for a moment, though I could not well say why. As to Miss Fraser, he was much more demonstrative, and he listened with evident interest to my account of Colonel Fraser. I pointed out to him all the beauties of the place, and was favoured with his

opinions in return. He did not hesitate to indicate an intention to carry out very extensive alterations if ever he had the chance. But he was not prepared for the fine old pile, and could not suppress an exclamation of surprise as a bend in the avenue brought the façade into full view, with the declining sun lighting up the long lines of windows.

I scarcely knew the old Hall of the Castle. Splendid trophies of arms had taken the place of the foxes' heads and the ancient implements and results of the chase by land and water, which had been attached to the walls. Polished blades of damasked steel, long-barreled matchlocks mounted in gold and ivory, chain armour and coats of mail, shields, sheaves of arrows and long lances, glittered in well-designed devices all around, and the floor was covered with tiger and leopard skins. Throughout the house all was changed—and very much for the better. When I entered the drawing-room it was difficult to believe I was in the grim, vast, comfortless apartment which Mary and I now and then were audacious enough to turn into a playground. Sir Denis and his niece were already surrounded by a number of the guests invited beforehand to celebrate the arrival of the Bengal Tigers in Kilmoyle. It was Sir Denis's first large dinner. There was

Lord Belbrook of course, and Sir Aymeric Boyle; there was an assemblage of Caseys and Croftons and O'Briens and Lawders and Nesbitts; the Earl of Mullinahone was expected, so was the Baroness O'Toole; but to the great disgust of the young ladies, our Major had given the word for black coats and white cravats instead of our lovely scarlet with gosling-green facings and gold lace.

"Old Bag pays weddy money to his outfittaw," observed our spoiled ensign, "and ways cast-off waytaw's dwess clows, which is cheepaw than wed clawth and twinsel."

And so the "stwappaws," as he irreverently termed the Misses Clochetour, the three blooming daughters of Lord Belbrook, who was an intensely domestic resident peer, were hard set to conceal their disappointment as one Bengal Tiger after another came in with his black tails pendant behind him. Sir Denis caused a small horror and delight when, as the clock struck seven and dinner was announced by a dark-visaged major-domo, he led Mrs. Casey down to dinner without waiting for the Right Hon. the Earl of Mullinahone, a full representative peer, and completely disregarded an intimation from Sir Aymeric Boyle, who was placed in a distant window, that the "Baroness's old greys

had just turned the corner." Such a banquet had not been attempted in the house since Dick Butler's wedding, and only the County Dinner once every three years commanded such an array of guests; but Sir Denis was accustomed to "Burra Khanahs," and had some love of state and pomp about him. The liveries of the Desmonds had never showed to such advantage as when in all their newness they were set off by the snow-white dresses of the Hindostanees, who, with their arms folded on their breasts, and the heraldic devices of their master embossed on silver plaques on their scarlet and gold turbans and on the sleeves of their flowing robes, stood at intervals around the table. The Honourable Letty Clochetour, who was of a romantic habit of mind, declared she was quite sure they were princes kept in captivity by the terrible annexer of Auripore; but her aunt, Mrs. Casey, who took rather a practical view of men and manners, vowed they were perfectly useless and quite spoiled her dinner by the way their eyes rolled about. The Countess O'Toole, who was the relict of an ancient Count of the Holy Roman Empire, condemned by her husband's will to live in a land he had carefully avoided, was in good humour for once, as no offence had been caused to her dignity as a Ba-

ronin Von Clam-Beck by any ill-regulated matter of precedence in handing in to dinner. She settled down quite good naturedly next to Gerald Desmond, whose German was just strong enough for quiet dialogue. The Earl of Mullinahone, on whose face a gleam of anger was visible when he entered the room, towards the middle period of the first epoch of dinner, was mollified by Mary's sweet face and welcome as he took a vacant chair beside her far away from me, and by a prawn curry of surpassing excellence. Altogether there was a triumph, although the spoiled ensign became excited and drank more wine than was quite good for him, in spite of Bagshaw's reprehension of the premonitory symptoms conveyed in repeated frownings.

But where was Miss Fraser all the time? She had not appeared in the drawing-room—she was not there when we went from table in straggling talkative procession. I wondered at her absence, but did not venture to ask any question.

A servant summoned Miss Butler ere I could speak to her. She returned hurriedly and went to Sir Denis, who was engaged in a small debate on the land question with the county magnates, and spoke to him anxiously. He listened attentively, and then, glancing round the room,

came over to a secluded corner where I had thrown up a breast-work against Miss Josephine Casey, and said in a low voice—

"You would oblige me if you could step into the long corridor. You know the house well? I shall be with you in a moment."

It was not long, in effect, ere he came out to the old passage, in which I was pacing up and down, and, drawing his arm within mine, said, as he continued his walk:—

"Mr. Brady, I have sent for Doctor Duke, but meantime you will oblige me, perhaps, by seeing Miss Fraser, who has had severe fainting fits since you saw her at the Barrack. I am sorry the first time you visit the Castle since your boyhood you should have occasion to see a patient, but I dare say you will not object to such an interesting charge. It is only a little weakness, I suppose. But it's strange and alarming."

Presently I was standing by Mabel Fraser's side. Mary Butler held her head in those fair round arms, and looked anxiously in my face as I felt her pulse. The room was in disorder. The looking-glass lay broken on the floor. The ilet table was overturned.

"Oh! Miss Mary, the poor dear has been very

bad again since you left!" ejaculated the maid. "I a'most feared she'd have hurt herself, or jumped through the window."

Mabel Fraser lay calm as a sleeping child in her friend's arms, but her eyes were open and staring into vacancy, with an expression of horror or fear. She had been dressing for dinner when the illness first came on; her maid left the room for a moment, and was on her way back, when she heard screams, as if of distress and fright, and voices—she was quite sure of that—voices—her young mistress's and another person's—in the room, and, running in, she found the window open, and Miss Fraser crouched in a corner, unable to speak, "looking just as she does now." The pulse was very feeble and very fluttering. I could scarce hear the beating of the girl's heart. The symptoms were those of syncope; a complete exhaustion of the nervous power, owing to some great shock. Miss Butler, summoned by the maid, discovered her standing at the open window; she uttered a loud cry on seeing her, and fell into her arms. She could not explain the reason of her alarm. She had been frightened by a sudden noise—something—she could not tell what—in the room, and, not being very well that day, had fainted, as she ran to the bell to ring for her maid. How

the window came to be open she could not tell. But it was not at all to be wondered at, as the evening was fine and warm. Then she quite recovered after a while, laughed at herself and her fears, in her own lively way, and promised to make all haste to be down in time for dinner. She sent word to Sir Denis, however, that he must excuse her, on account of a bad headache. A couple of hours afterwards, a servant passing along the corridor heard a violent ringing of the bell and loud cries for help, and, rushing in, discovered Mabel Fraser hiding in terror behind a sofa in the corner, with all the things upset, as we saw them.

What did an assistant-surgeon in the Royal Tigers know of such cases? I ordered the whole pharmacopœia of the house in my distress. Miss Butler hurried off for sal volatile. Susan dashed off for the housekeeper's "drops;" and I, meantime, attacked the bed for feathers, and burnt enough to wing a dodo.

"Are we alone?" exclaimed Mabel Fraser, so suddenly, that I dropped a perfect flight of goose down. "Quick! for the mercy of God, quick!"

"Where? what? what am I to do?"

"To do!" she exclaimed, "to do nothing, to

say nothing—to hold your tongue, as I must hold mine, though I die. Ah, would to God I could! Oh, Heaven, *how* I would thank thee." And she raised her eyes with an expression so despairing, so pitiful, that I was rooted to the spot, and stood with my candle in one hand and a bunch of feathers in the other, utterly useless and intensely sympathetic.

Mabel Fraser turned her eyes down and caught mine. "Ah! my poor boy," she said, tenderly and softly, "there is trouble—great trouble in store for us both, I fear. Oh! what am I to do? what am I to do?" She beat her hands on her knees, and the wild vague look came into her eyes again.

"You and I! Trouble for us both!" cried I. "I, too! What are you speaking of? I entreat of you to tell me—let me——"

"Hush!" she whispered. "They come. Oh, Mary dear!" she continued, as Miss Butler entered, followed by the housekeeper, the maid, and a servant-girl with a vast medicine chest; "I am so glad to see you, darling. I am myself again. The horrid feeling has gone off. Thanks, Mr. Brady. Quite enough of burnt feathers for to-night, I hope and trust. I shall do now! Pray go! Many thanks! Good night! good night!"

She held out her hand, and as I took it in mine,

a glance of great pity and tenderness passed over her face.

"Thanks for all your kindness, Dr. Brady. And now, Mary darling, go back to the dining-room, and leave me with Susan, or I shall be miserable. I must sleep off this nightmare, or weakness, or whatever it is, which makes me such a nuisance in a well-regulated house. Give my evening 'good-night' to dear Sir Denis."

I lingered at the door, but Miss Butler did not come out again. When I went to the drawing-room the company were leaving fast. Sir Denis was uneasy. "Would you mind sleeping here to-night?" he asked. "Dr. Duke is off to aid in an interesting event, which may keep him away till morning, and I dare say the colonel will give you leave from barracks to-night."

It was arranged that I was to sleep in the house, and that my servant should come over with my things in the morning. Happy to be under the same roof—well! to be under the roof of the old Castle once more—I sat in my bed-room, which was in the long corridor, at the other end of which Miss Fraser's room lay, and taking up a book tried to read. But my thoughts were fixed on Mabel Fraser, and her strange illness. What

extraordinary stupidity I had displayed in reference to our interview when we were alone!

There was a tap at my door. I said "Come in," and started at the sight of an unexpected visitor. Sir Denis Desmond, in an Indian dressing-gown, opened the door, and sat down at my table.

"I have come to ask you what you make out of it?" he asked. "It is to me inexplicable."

"I cannot say what the cause was, Sir Denis. I thought there might be something wrong with the heart—tight lacing is so mischievous—but I am satisfied Miss Fraser is all right there. Some cause, which Dr. Duke may be able to discover, is at the bottom of the nervous disturbance; but it is quite beyond my power. I have been thinking over it in every way; but as I am a young practitioner, it is not very surprising if the case is new to me."

"No wonder, indeed," remarked Sir Denis. "I have been to see Miss Fraser, but my questions only seemed to agitate her, and I have come to have a little talk with you. Did you ever read in any of your books"—he went on—"of a case in which a young lady was strong enough to overturn tables and chairs—to speak with two voices—to be unconscious and yet to be violently agitated at the same time? You need not answer, of course.

There is something about this illness neither of us can understand." He tapped the table with his fingers whilst he reflected for a few moments. I watched the shadows pass over his resolute, hard, and handsome features so closely, that I blushed when he met my gaze with his steady glance, and asked me, curtly—

"Do you know who Miss Fraser is? I mean, have you any idea of how she comes here?"

"Not the least, Sir Denis. I know she is the daughter of Colonel Fraser, who was a friend of my poor father, and of your own, and whom I met in Dublin a couple of years ago or more."

"A friend of your father?" repeated Sir Denis, with a singular expression of the mouth and eyebrow. "Come, let us be frank. Do you know anything more of him? Have you never heard——"

He paused at my supplicating gesture—"I do not wish to hurt you in any way—but, on the contrary, I will and I would do all I could and can to be of real service to you, Mr. Brady. And if this occasion had not come so early, I should have sought one for an explanation of matters which concern us both. Yes, both! You will know why I say so by and by. There should be no illusions between us. You are at the outset of your career. You

are, I have heard from that excellent old friend of yours, Mr. Bates, exceedingly sensitive about your family secrets. Perhaps there is no one who knows so much of them as I do! You seem surprised, but it is so. Believe me, if I did not think I was bound by duty to do you a service, I would not meddle in anything which relates to the welfare or fortunes of your father's son for his benefit."

"My father, Sir Denis. Good God! How could he have incurred your resentment?"

"My resentment? No, my——Well, no matter. Let it be enough, that I felt towards him once as one man is like to feel towards another who has inflicted two great wrongs on his life. Whatever were my own wrongs at his hands, they are atoned for, and are now forgiven, God knows! After all, perhaps I owe much to your father, though he did not know it. But not so in another case. Next to the love I felt for the girl whom your father married, was the affection I felt for my sister. Need I say more? You know what happened. The Desmonds, it is said, are not a forgiving race, but the saying is not true. I went out to India a mere boy. I went there with the purpose of making myself a name if I could—of rising in the service to the highest—of carrying out

the dreams which, in the old days of Haileybury, filled every boy's head who had any spirit in him, but which are now gone off to the region of Chimera. You know how I have succeeded."

"Yes indeed, Sir Denis," I exclaimed. "We are all proud of you."

Sir Denis's eyes sparkled, and his brow was knit as he replied, "I tell you, young man, I have failed miserably. Men whom I scorned and despised—small pitiful pedlers, passed me in the race. I have retired here beaten and disgraced. Ah, you do not know of what I am speaking! When your father, young man, married the woman on whom I had set my heart, for whom I was working as man perhaps never toiled before—I felt my sun had left the world for ever, and all was dark and vague and purposeless before me. True, she had played others false too. But day by day I had had letters from her, carried hundreds of miles, up to the very moment that the news came. I remember it as if it were yesterday. Such letters! My God!"

"And how was my father to blame, Sir Denis?" I asked. "Surely it was most unjust to blame him?"

"No, sir, it was not. He was bound in honour to the best of women on earth—my darling sister—

and his desertion of her, although she married Richard Butler to please her brother, killed that poor girl as surely as though he struck her with a dagger to the heart. But Heaven knows he suffered for it."

"God knows he did," I repeated. "He did indeed, indeed."

Sir Denis sat moodily and silently, with folded arms, and a frown on his brow, and heeded me not for a time. At length he continued—

"You may not be aware why your father was preferred to me. I will tell you, and in doing so, will acquaint you with some matters which have been for many reasons kept secret from you. You are aware—though, as Bates informed me, without knowing the full purport of it—that your great-grandfather married a cousin of the Desmond of that day—a poor cadette of the family. By the strange fatality which has pursued us, that junior branch became the main line. There have been no direct heirs, male or female, for years back in our house, till my poor sister married Dick Butler, and my brother Gerald married Rose de Lacy. My father came in by collateral descent as heir to his uncle, who succeeded to an uncle also; but he left three sons and one daughter, and it was supposed the curse

which the country people declared was inflicted on us for our loyalty to the Crown, had passed away. And so it has. My brother Richard never married, as you know. I shall never marry, but there is my nephew Gerald to come after me, and my niece, Miss Butler, will have a share of the little that has been left to us. You are wondering to what this leads. Do you not see?"

"Not in the least, Sir Denis."

"Why to this—that after myself and Gerald Desmond and Mary Butler, my niece, you are absolutely the nearest of kin to the Desmonds of Kilmoyle, if they have no offspring and you survive them. You stare, young man; but I do assure you it is so, nevertheless. The lawyers have been looking into the matter, and it is quite certain. Don't look as if the world was coming to an end."

"I don't want to hear this, Sir Denis. I can't believe it. I can't—"

"But it is no such good news, my young friend. Kilmoyle is in a bad way, and even if it were in a good one, your chance of succession would not be very great."

"Thank God!" I burst out.

"Oh, do not thank God till you know that it is a blessing or a curse. I confess I am not good

enough to return thanks for curses, and I don't think it's expected. But now we have got to this point—you understand so much. Can you, if you know anything of your mother's character, now guess why she jilted me—and many more beside?"

"Not in the least, sir. I fear she did not love my poor father."

"Love!" Sir Denis looked at me as though he were about to say some very angry and very bitter thing; but a change came over his face as he went on. "Love him, indeed—no, nor a living soul. She had not even such affection—*storgé* you call it—as the most treacherous and cruel creatures feel for their young. No, she did not love your father. But she got it into her head some way or other that—now mark me well—if I were put out of the way—for example, if I were to die in India—your father would come into a good chance of the estates. You see, at the time, my brother Gerald had no child—my brother Dick was unmarried, and was never likely to change his condition—my sister Mary was unmarried. God knows what calculations crossed the brain of that woman. But certain it is she wormed out all the facts connected with the succession—perhaps, too, seeing the weight such arguments lent to his suit, your father may have

coloured his sketch a little. But there is no doubt, for I have proofs of it, that she had made up her mind to be mistress of Kilmoyle."

"And how could she hope to be, sir? There were, as you say, Sir Richard and yourself, and your brother Gerald and your sister Mary all living. One was married—all might marry. It is too fanciful, you will pardon me for saying, to think such ideas ever crossed the mind of a girl of sixteen. My dear Sir Denis, it is really too much."

"There were, as you say, four of us living; and there was also your grandfather alive at the time. But for all that, she made her calculations, I can tell you."

"But," persisted I, "had she married you at once, there would have been a whole mass of natural obstacles swept away. Why should she have married my father?"

"That is the most natural remark in the world, and it is difficult to explain the reasons without knowing what she was. But I had unwittingly hurt her pride and aroused her devilish animosity, and she hated me—yes! hated me!—even while she was sending me letters every day full of honeyed words, ill-spelt at times, by the way. I told her I

never would marry till I had attained a certain position, and that I would divide all I had, if ever I came into Kilmoyle, with my sister Mary. And as to chances, Mary, my sister, might not marry, or might not have children. The same of my brother. As to what she looked forward to, I would rather not say; but it is my conviction that she intended to make her husband's chances pretty good. She has a great power of staying, as they say, and a firm belief in fate, and in her fortunes."

I own the whole tenor of Sir Denis' statement had by this time thrown me into a maze, in which doubts of his sanity and of my own identity were uppermost by turns.

"Well, I may as well go on to the end," he added, "for it is right you should know the story. Whether the reasons assigned for her choice are right or wrong, I believe them to be true. The secret passion of her life—the only affection she has—is a plot. If she married me there would have been little to plot for. She could no more move in the open than could a tiger. But there has been always a strange fatality about all her calculations. The plot comes to a certain degree of development, and then she is crossed by some

small obstacle, or a clumsy blow breaks through the spider's web. Three months before she married your father, my brother Gerald's wife presented him with a son and heir; the first news she received on reaching Calcutta was the birth of my niece Mary, and the death, alas! of my poor sister. Then it was perhaps she resolved to make a new *coup*, and you are aware of the famous stratagem she employed. When she found by chance or planning that Fraser, one of her many lovers, was a fellow-passenger, her ceaseless activity of brain played her a bad turn. She heard he was likely to come in for a great fortune; but before she committed herself, she tried what stuff I was made of,—if I could still be turned to account. As soon as she landed, she told Fraser some story to delay the marriage, and meantime sent off to the Court to which I had just been appointed. Well, I returned her an answer, which I have no doubt gave her little concern, though I tried to put into every line some of the bitterness with which she had filled my life. She married as she thought, her poor dupe—as it turned out, her master. Alan Fraser was just the man she deserved to win in such a game. He was her better, and at her own play, too. He admired and I believe loved her, and the story of

his great expectations was spread by him through his servants to entrap her. He had married soon after your father's wedding a poor girl who deserved a better fate than befel her, and she died a short time before Fraser set out for Europe."

"Miss Fraser," I interrupted, "is the daughter of that marriage?"

"Colonel Fraser's wife did not think so," replied Sir Denis. "Soon after the birth of the infant, in Fraser's absence on duty, Mrs. Fraser was attacked by a malady from which she never recovered, and she died declaring that the babe, which Fraser—the only good trait in his nature I know of—loved so tenderly, was not her child. Some months after Mrs. Fraser died, Colonel, then Major Fraser, was appointed to a post in the North West; and there appeared with him a beautiful woman, who was introduced as his wife. But though morality is not very tight-laced in India, society was shocked by such outrageous indecency, and the new-comer was never received. Presently the Bazaar was filled with stories of violent scenes between him and his new wife; one night she left him, never to return again. It would be foolish to suppose that two such persons did not keep up their old relations whenever it could be of service. You are of

course scarcely prepared to hear it said that Mabel Fraser is not the daughter of the first Mrs. Alan Fraser, and that she was placed in the arms of the nurse by a woman who took away the innocent child, over whose fate there is such a veil?"

Was I in the flesh, listening to the words of a sensible, reputable country gentleman in an Irish country-house in the middle of the nineteenth century?

"It is not surprising, indeed, Terence Brady, if what I tell you takes away your breath. Mind you, there is no proof; but I have a moral conviction that the poor child above whom we call Mabel, was for some inscrutable purpose substituted for the child of Mrs. Fraser at Harungabad."

"And why then do you keep her in your house, Sir Denis, and allow her to be called Miss Fraser? Pardon me, but I think you do wrong."

"If she had gone back to India she would have assuredly fallen into the hands of that woman. It was with great pleasure — with something too of my old feelings for her who crossed one's path as lightning passes through an oak, to leave its mark for ever—I took the girl to be my niece's companion—to be in fact my second daughter—out of a wicked and awful future. And now you

know more than all the world beside, except three persons, of a very strange story. Many parts of the relations between myself and others in whom you are interested I pass over; but I tell you so much that you may know what an interest I have in you, and know what I must prevent. And now one word more. I wish you to pay heed to it, and to take it as I mean it. The Desmonds and Bradys have done each other no good. It is my duty to prevent any renewal of disastrous alliances. You understand me, I see. Enough. God bless you, and good night."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FACE AT THE WINDOW.

It was daylight when Sir Denis Desmond rose to leave my room. When he went forth there was a darkness on my soul which no sunlight could clear away.

Dr. Duke had come and gone ere I was up in the morning. He left a general impression of indigestion behind him. "It was all liver," he said.

Sir Denis did not appear at breakfast. Miss Butler and Gerald and I sat down after prayers at the little round table in the study.

"And what the deuce is really the matter with the pretty creature?" asked Gerald, with a slice of tongue on his fork. "My man says she had a regular up and down fight with the Evil One, or a burglar, or Captain Rock, and that the room is filled with tokens of a regular bruising match. And I ask what is it? Dr. Duke says it was a severe nervous attack, the result of indigestion.

Dr. Brady can't say what it was. But why did the dear young lady knock all the Castle properties about? If the boys get hold of the story there can be no convictions on fair days for broken heads and sundries. It will all be nervous attacks and indigestion. Why, you both look as if you had been out with the witches! You are as white as a snow-drop, my fair cousin; and the Doctor has the air of a man who has been on a broomstick all night. And do you know," he continued, more seriously, "I had my adventure too last night. It is really quite delightful now-a-days to find a house with a little sensation in it, when there's no Cock Lane ghost, and no haunted mansion in Fleet Street."

"Indeed, cousin!" said Mary; "I suppose you had some difficulty in finding your way back to your room from that little cave which my uncle condemns all smokers to inhabit whilst they are enjoying themselves?"

"Well, it was not exactly that, but it arose out of the cave question nevertheless. You are quite right in abusing that frightful coal-cellar, cousin Mary, and you and I must agitate for a reform. A bas la bastille! I was choking there, and so I told that old mummy to let me out into the garden.

As the night was fine I trotted up and down along the tiled path, as happy as a man with a peaceful conscience and a good cigar could be, till my weed was done, and then I turned to go in. As I reached the door, which had been left ajar, the dogs were barking tremendously in the outer yard, I thought the doctor had come. I had told the old man not to sit up, and was putting up bars and bolts as I promised him, when I saw just at the grated window by the side of the door, a pair of great big eyes looking in at me."

"Eyes! cousin Gerald!—what eyes?"

"Ah, that's the question. Not yours, cousin Mary, I can swear—nor Miss Fraser's, though 'pon my honour, they were like hers. I unbolted the door and popped out in an instant;—my candle went out too,—but I heard the boards at the door-step creak, and I thought I could make out a figure in the dark—ran straight on—hit my face against a wall, and gave up my ghost."

"But surely, Gerald, you are joking?" asked Mary, in some alarm. "You must tell my uncle of this apparition. The country is very much disturbed, and this ought to be looked into."

"The face? It was a pretty one. Like Miss Fraser's, too! The old black fellow, who was up

in spite of my orders, coolly said it was the house dog, which is in the habit, he says, of putting its nose to the window and scratching to get in. If so, the house dog has very fine eyes and hair, and a very white skin, I can tell you."

"Are you serious, cousin Gerald?" urged Mary, very gravely.

"Not at all, but very truthful, my dear coz," quoth Gerald, tapping an egg. "'Pon my word! It is so very jolly to find something out of the common, and I'm in love with this place already—not to say a word of all that it inherits. What do you think of it all, Doctor? Have you seen—Hullo, Doctor!"—he stopped tapping, and laid down his egg-cup suddenly—"why, there again! you look as if you had been having two bad nights with the ghosts. Do you see one now?"

"Yes, indeed, Terence," added Miss Butler. "You have a most uncanny aspect this morning! We really are objects for compassion! Uncle Denis is not very well; Mabel Fraser is only just becoming a sensible creature; you, Gerald, have been frightened by an owl, and Terence—Dr. Brady I mean—looks as much alarmed as he did the day I gave him a scolding for telling a fib! What can it all mean?"

"It means all sorts of fun. I am quite in good spirits for the first time since I came to my own—my native land. Ghosts, and mysteries, and rebels! Smugglers, and witches, and fainting damsels! And, talking of rebels, what a pretty girl that rebel's sister is you drove through Kilmoyle. Had she been Flora McIvor, withering a Hanoverian of the day with a glance, she could not have looked more haughtily at me. I almost regretted you were good enough to make her conscious of my existence."

"Cousin Gerald, if you only knew how much Rose Prendergast has suffered, you would pity her from the bottom of your heart. She will leave us very soon for America; and if ever goodness of soul and the disposition of an angel deserve happiness in this world she will find it."

"'Pon my word, cousin, I hope so for the sake of your friend—even in America. If a scornful beauty can deserve a good husband, and if Miss Prendergast thinks she can share her goodness with any kind fellow, I trust she may meet some one worthy of her in the New World! Doctor, it is time for us to set out for Kilmoyle, unless you are quite indifferent to the safety of the 'Bengal Tigers.'"

I had not closed my eyes all night. I turned and tossed in agony of mind for weary hours. That I was connected somehow or other with the Desmonds, I knew; but the revelation made to me, by Sir Denis last night, was all but incredible. And then the ominous words as he parted. Had he penetrated my secret thoughts?—nay, the very fancies which came unbidden as dreams, and which in every conscious moment I chased away? Did I wear my heart upon my sleeve, for every daw to peck at? If he suspected me, did not Mary Butler suspect me too? Must she not know that I was guilty of loving her? And if she did, how dreadful was the punishment of her calm indifference! I was wroth that Sir Denis Desmond should dare to warn me, as if I were a base schemer or sordid plotter. The poorest wretch that crawls can love whom he lists, and if love wills it, he cannot if he would be free. I would execute a solemn act, renouncing every claim, in any possible way, to the remotest benefit from these accursed estates. Sir Denis might probe: he should not find the wound though he killed me. I would take away every pretext for his jealousy of my purposes, and if legal forms could do it, I would cut off every interest that could come to me, if every Desmond were dead to-morrow,

in those beggarly acres. I would speak to Mary Butler of the unworthy suspicions of her uncle, and then, if I saw she pitied me, promise that I would never see her again. I would tell her the sad tale of my love; I would ask her forgiveness, and fly for ever from her sight. Poor wretch! When morning came I knew I was too weak to do aught but love on in silence, and to keep my secret hugged close to my heart. I was in a reverie all during breakfast. The strange illness of Miss Fraser—the voices when she was alone—the confusion in her room—the open window,—her frenzied alarm —her words to me—and those awful eyes—"like hers," he said—there was something here again full of vague terror to me. I could not at all account for my apprehensions, or define them. It may be imagined, indeed, that by this time I had ceased to try to account for anything which happened to myself or to those around me. Sir Denis's revelation was the last mark of confidence I expected from such a man, and the purport of it was certainly as curious as any story well could be. I gave up asking myself why he or any one else did or said anything, simply because I never could get an answer. It was "in the fitness of things," as poor Sir Richard used to

say, that I should be made the sport of other people's caprices, or antipathies, or likings, and I was about becoming proud of the trouble Fate was taking to vex me for ever, and discovering in my pride some panacea for her persecutions. And, after all, what did it come to? I was sound in wind and limb—not so sure about the head; I was young and active; there was enough to be got out of my profession to live on. I had a very remarkable mother, as it seemed to me; but she had not taken the trouble of writing to me for a long time. She was aware it led to no good, and if she knew of my meeting with Colonel Fraser, had made up her mind there would be now less use in trying to turn me to any profitable account than ever. As to Sir Denis's intimation that I was, however remotely, interested in the succession to Kilmoyle, I felt at last no emotion; indeed, I could not understand it, or bring the notion home to my thoughts. Then Mary Butler, I argued, had not the smallest love for me, or suspicion of my regard for her. Her frankness, her perfect ease and freedom, when I was all reserve and awkwardness, her placid look and open smile when we met, quite satisfied me that Mary Butler had no

other feeling than that which animated her to deliver me some lectures, in years gone by, on my juvenile delinquencies.

There are times when a man can shake off the influence of his master-passion and persuade himself it does not exist at all. The stag hard hit with the fatal lead will bound away, so that the stalker shall have no suspicion of the success of his aim, will halt to look round, and then run on till, all suddenly, it falls—never to rise again. Can the poor creature ever believe in its course that the shock of the wound was but momentary, and that the dull pain, passing away, will come back no more? I felt for two or three whole minutes that I was very supremely indifferent about Miss Mary Butler. Wasn't that eldest Miss Clochetour a much finer girl? Am I quite sure Miss Casey did not give my hand a little squeeze as I led her to the carriage? There was no comparison between Miss Butler and Miss Fraser in complexion and hair. In fact, I say, as I am about going off to Barrack, there is no reason to think there is a trace of my boyish passion for the young lady who has evidently made up her mind to be Mrs. Gerald Desmond. As to Miss Fraser, what matters it to me who she is?

She is a friend of Miss Butler, the daughter of that man who was in league with my mother, and who has betaken himself off, never to trouble me again. If she be not his daughter, what matters it! Her illness?—She had, Dr. Duke says, "an attack of indigestion." So had Sir Denis Desmond when he came in and kept me up with his meandering narrative. Indians are very much subject to it.

And so, as Gerald Desmond, puffing his cigar, walked on with me by the short cuts which I knew so well towards the town, and rattled away about himself and the world which he was good enough to permit to revolve around him, I sought to persuade myself that I could control my own destiny and direct my course of my own free will through the stormy sea on which I was launched—"a prey to fortune."

Major Bagshaw was in a state of intense commanding-officerism when we presented ourselves in Barrack. Orders had just come in for the march of the much-vexed Tigers to Ballybottle and Drumnaglass, with the exception of one company—Desmond's, of course—which was to be left at Kilmoyle. Bagshaw was perfectly convinced that there resided in some crypt at the Horse Guards a secret but powerful enemy, whose whole time was passed in

devising plans to thwart and ruin him; and he rarely read even the most innocent document without detecting in it some fell purpose of his foe.

"Just see how I'm treated again, Desmond! Like your uncle amazingly! Nice part of the country. Lord Mullinahone delightful—Lord Bellbrook charming; the only nice quarters I've been in, I swear, since I left Corfu. And now that confounded rascal is at me again! Well! Some day I'll be even with him. Some day! or my name is not Emilius Bagshaw."

The Evil One, however, was to have his way for the present, and of course I was to leave Kilmoyle with the head-quarters; but I was in such a state of mind that it really would not have caused me much, if any, uneasiness to hear we were ordered to the North Pole, or the Falkland Islands, or Terra del Fuego.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM.

A couple of days after our arrival, when I had visited my sick and felt whisky pulses and examined tongues, and had established a proper equation between my conscience and the exigencies of the service, as represented by Major Bagshaw, and the "Morning State," I sat down to write an account of everything that had occurred since my last epistle to Mr. Bates, who was enjoying his exile with Major Turnbull at Bagnere de Luchon in fierce encounters of chess and protracted dominoes.

I had just finished the letter when my servant came in to say Sir Denis Desmond wished to see me. On going out into the barrack-yard, where he was smoking his cheroot and walking up and down with an abstracted air, he shook me by the hand with a cordiality not quite characteristic, and taking me by the arm as soon as he had ascertained

I was free, said he wished to have a few words with me quietly, in continuation of the conversation we had had at the Castle.

"You are very young, but an old fellow sometimes seeks support in the vigorous immaturity which is growing into life and action. You understand why I have an interest in you, and perhaps there may be grounds for even closer confidence between us by-and-by."

What could Sir Denis imply by these words? I communed with myself as he went on, talking of nothing in particular. Miss Fraser was quite herself again: he hoped she would appear at dinner; there was only a small party indeed—Gerald and Miss Butler, Miss Fraser, and myself. "My niece has persuaded, much against her will, a favourite acquaintance, a Miss Prendergast, to come over to us. She is leaving for America in a few days, and as we are going up to Dublin shortly, she has consented to come. A girlish whim of Mary! The sister of a rascally rebel and an outlaw, whom I have no wish to see inside my doors."

"Miss Prendergast is of a very old and honourable family," I began. "She is sister of that unfortunate Maurice who was my schoolfellow; but, rebel as he was, remember, Sir Denis, how young he

is, and believe me, with all his faults, he was a gentleman and a man of honour. His sister is much to be pitied."

Sir Denis made no remark for a moment or two; I could see he was not pleased with what I said. After a little he drew himself up, and stopped short in our walk.

"Let me give you advice this time, ere I ask for yours by-and-by. Sympathy for treason is dangerous, because it is a poison which spreads and works under the guise of sympathy and pity. You speak of honour and of honourable families: but I tell you, treason is a taint in the blood which destroys all honour. It is this feeble sentimental dallying with conspiracy and rebellion which weakens all authority of law, upsets order, and fosters the deadly disease of chronic disaffection. I warn you against indulging in it. These songs and ballads and stories, old and new, which appeal to our feelings and move compassion, are mischievous—bad in any country which needs all its energies for actual work to keep it alive,—fatal among such a race as our peasantry."

"But think of Cavalier songs and Roundhead canticles, Sir Denis! Think of Lillibulero! And the Jacobite ballads! They do no harm now,

though they were once powerful among the people."

"No harm! I'm not so sure of that," retorted Sir Denis, resuming his course. "If there were a cause to be sung for, 'Lillibulero' would be mischievous to-morrow. I would discourage all these allusions to the rebellions and the old savagery of this island—prohibit them, if needs were by law, till the evil spirit was dead, and sympathetic ballads and songs were merely antiquarian amusements. You will say, that would be to act as the Russian acts in Poland. Be it so. Poland will soon cease to give trouble to Russia, and would have ceased ere this but for foreign support and hopes raised abroad. But," continued Sir Denis, "I wished to speak to you before we meet at dinner, about a very different subject. I want to hear how you became acquainted with Colonel Fraser and his daughter?"

The Baronet slackened his pace. I told him of Colonel Fraser's visit to my chambers—the dinner—the occurrence which followed, and his departure without seeing me when I was in jeopardy in Dublin.

"He never mentioned, did he, what was his object in coming to Ireland?"

"Never, Sir Denis. He spoke as if he had come over to see the country—to visit some friends, without any other object."

"But it was not the fact. Alan Fraser is not a man who would go out of his way one half-mile to look at the fairest landscape on earth, or who would move a foot to visit a friend, unless he had an object in it. Well! What did you think of him?"

"Sir Denis, I did not like him. How could I? The moment he mentioned his name I knew the man. It was the name which appeared in the letters from India which my grandfather got long ago; and never would I have gone to the hotel but that I was so anxious to learn about—you understand what, Sir Denis. He tried to deceive me, but I let him see I knew all."

"Believe nothing he told you. Thank your good fortune that he did not close round on you, and pray that your paths may never cross again. It is the best thing for you to wish. You went to sup with this Prendergast, where you met the Indian Rustum who was hanging about Fraser—then you are waylaid coming home—see Fraser leaving a gambling-house—the most likely thing in the world—and next morning hear he was assailed, probably

by the ruffians who pursued you. There is something beneath that which I cannot make out. And Miss Fraser—anything of her?"

"I only saw her the evening I dined with them, when I was struck with the likeness to some one—you know who—in a picture in our house at home—a marvellous likeness. And then again, when I called to inquire after the Colonel. That foolish duel followed close on the other events of which I am speaking, and they left Dublin whilst the trials were going on."

"You never saw Miss Fraser since?"

"Never till I saw her in the carriage when we arrived in Kilmoyle."

"When did you last hear from your mother?"

"Oh, 'tis a long time now. She wrote me a very singular letter and I took no notice of it, but she has had communications through her lawyers with Mr. Bates. I believe he takes no notice of them either."

"Did she in any of her letters ever mention Miss Fraser's name to you?"

"No, Sir Denis."

"And this picture of which you spoke? You say it is a portrait of your mother, and that it is very like Miss Fraser?"

"As I said, marvellous. It is in the old house close at hand now. I have not seen it for many a day. If you would like to judge for yourself, I am sure Mrs. Considine, the tenant, would have no objection to our looking at it—shall we go?"

"A capital idea. Let us do so, by all means."

In a few minutes more we were at the door of Lough-na-Carra. Sir Denis looked with interest at the ruined house. "A quarter of a century and more," he said, "makes a change. If the walls had eyes, they would perceive as much in me."

The barefooted maiden who took in my name to Mrs. Considine, with a request that she would permit me to pay her a visit, and to look over the old place, returned with her mistress's message that I was at home in Lough-na-Carra, but that she hoped I would excuse her meeting us, as she was ill in bed. "And so she is, poor lady, and mighty bad, too! Miss Butler and Miss Rose—God bless them!—just keeps the life in her."

I led the way to the well-known room, opened the door—"Heavens, it's not there!" I exclaimed in much surprise—"it's gone—the picture's gone."

The frame was empty. It hung discoloured and worm-eaten on the wall.

"There niver was anything there, sir," said the

maid, "except what you see, since I've been here, and that's two years come Candlemas-day."

"But there is another," I interrupted, "a picture of a lady with fair hair and a leopard beside her—it hung in the back bed-room opposite the landing at the top of the stairs."

"That's Mrs. Considine's room, sir. There's no such picture there. But there's a frame empty like that, only brighter a bit. They're just as I always seen them."

"Will you go up and ask Mrs. Considine, with my compliments, if she knows what became of the two pictures of ladies which were in these frames when she came to Lough-na-Carra?"

It was some little time ere the maid returned. "I was waiting till the missus could find the paper in her deshk. She says, sir, if you'll read it you'll see how it is."

I opened a folded letter addressed to "Mrs. Considine, Lough-na-Carra," and read:—

"Dublin, March 1st, 18—, Dominick Street.

"Dear Madam,—As I am desirous of removing the portrait of Mrs. Brady and the copy thereof on behalf of my ward and client, I beg you will permit the bearer to have them on production of this letter,

which will be a receipt for the same to be annexed to your copy of the inventory. I trust to hear better reports of the farming, and that your son may find it more to his taste to assist you in turning the lease to good account. I shall write fully on business very soon, and beg you to believe me, dear madam, your faithful servant,

"J. BATES."

"Why, that is most extraordinary! I never heard of the pictures being taken before!"

"And the missus told me to say to your honour, the gentleman that came took them away with him in a roll, and went off straight from the house with them. You'll see when it was by the date of the letter, for it was three days after it he came, Mrs. Considine says, and she says she hopes it's all right."

"Is it in Mr. Bates' handwriting?" inquired Sir Denis. "Just see."

"It is very like it. And yet I think I see a difference too. The date is oddly enough about the time when Mr. Bates and I were in constant communication about my miserable trial."

"About the time, then, that Colonel Fraser was in Ireland, and made his tour," observed Sir Denis.

"It's not at all odd—at least I think I can understand it—and I'm inclined to bet that when you hear from Mr. Bates, he tells you he never wrote that letter. Let us go."

Sir Denis Desmond and Terence Brady walked down the old avenue in silence—at least he did not speak to me nor did I to him; but as he went along at his own quick rate, he muttered to himself at times, and now and then broke into exclamations in a language I could not understand. Not a word passed between us till we nearly reached the old bridge, and then I reminded him that I had duty at the Barrack before dinner, and that my way lay to the right of the main road.

"I forgot the principal object of my visit to you, but we can have a few minutes after dinner; and I have leave for Gerald and you to sleep at the Castle. It is connected with the subject I have already mentioned, but as you are going so soon it will be necessary to be more explicit. You will see a good deal of my nephew, and you can form an opinion about him which I shall ask you for presently. I am sure I can depend on you. Good day, Terence, as I venture to call you."

I was so deep in thought that I did not notice a man who was close behind me till he spoke.

"Heaven bless your honour! And could you come to Coolbawn to see the poor old father that says he'll die happy if he claps eyes on you?"

"Oh! good day, Macarthy. How far is it then to Coolbawn? I should like to see the old man if I can."

"Troth, and it's not an hour for you, sir!"

"An hour! And an hour back! I am very sorry, but I fear I can't do it. It's too late now."

The man seemed disappointed. "And the ridgment's ordered off, I'm tould! There's more than the ould man would be glad to see you if you'd come. Do, Mr. Terence, if you can—do come."

"More? What do you mean by more? I don't understand you."

"Didn't I tell your honour if you liked I might be able to tell you something of Mr. Maurice —of Maurice Prendergast, your true friend?"

"Well, you can tell me now, Macarthy. It is too late to go to Coolbawn, and I must wait for another day."

"Would your honour care to see any one who has seen Mr. Maurice quite lately?"

"I should like to hear good news of him for old times' sake, from any one."

"Listen, your honour. I know a man who saw him not long ago, and I could show that man to you in a minute."

"Well, and where is he?"

The fellow looked round quickly, with his finger touched his left breast, and said, "Here he is, Mr. Terence!"

"You! And where have you seen him? Not in Ireland? Why, he is in danger of his life. Don't you know he is an outlaw?"

"Och and och! an outlaw maybe! And what would most of us be if the truth was known, Mr. Terence? Shure, them that has nothing to do with the law but breaking it, needn't mind much what them that makes the law calls them, as long as they don't come under it? I didn't say where I saw him, and if you don't care to know I'll tell you it was in Amerikay. Good evening to your honour! I'll tell Mr. Maurice the next time I lay eyes on him how sorry you were you couldn't spare time to go out to Coolbawn."

There was a suppressed insolence in the fellow's air which annoyed me, and ere I recovered my temper and wished to ask after the unfortunate exile, the man had turned up a lane and was gone.

When I reached the Barrack, the whole effective

force of the officers, headed by the Major, were preparing for their expedition to Lord Bellbrook's. Only Desmond and myself were to dine at the Castle.

There was just time to send off a few lines to Mr. Bates concerning the removal of the pictures, before Gerald's voice summoned me to "come along." Something had quite put him out, and as he gave the reins to me, with a request that I would drive, his hand trembled. He was silent and moody, eyeing me askance, and scarcely noticing the attempts I soon abandoned to rouse him into conversation.

In the drawing-room we found Sir Denis, Mary, and Miss Fraser. The latter was a little pale, she sought to appear perfectly composed; but there was a quivering of the lip and drooping of the eyelid as I entered, which could not be repressed. Mary was graver than usual, but gravity became her as much as gaiety; and in whatever mood she might be, she was best.

"Have you read the papers, Gerald? The news looks warlike," observed Sir Denis, at dinner. "If Russia does not give way, we must see Turkey dismembered, or fight." Sir Denis, like most Indians, was a Russophobist. "If we allow the Czar to

carry his point, we lose our hold on our Eastern empire."

"I declare, uncle, without the least disrespect to you, I don't think that would very much matter," said Gerald; "but I own I should like a little active service."

"And so should I," exclaimed I. "Active service above all things."

"*Your* active service, my good doctor!" remarked Gerald, with a contemptuous air. "I don't see much fun in *that!* What on earth can a doctor find to like in war? To be sure, there will be work for him to do; but such work! *Chacun a son goût.*"

"Do you know, Gerald," said Sir Denis, "I have seen something of war in our Indian fashion, and have been with men in great peril and under severe trials, and two or three of the bravest men I ever met—really brave, for they had no excitement to carry them through the danger—were surgeons."

I was burning with anger, for I twisted Gerald's words into a covert insinuation; and Mary, who probably guessed what was passing in my mind, broke in with her clear voice, "It seems to us poor women that you do yourselves injustice sometimes. Is it not so, Uncle Denis? You say of one

set of men, 'they are brave,' of another 'they are not brave.' And if we ask why, we find it is because the first wear, and that the others do not, a certain sort of clothes. We would like to think courage was a common quality of men, and it is disconcerting to hear you speak as if it were exceptional, and depended on the profession a man is in. Why should not Mr. Brady like a campaign as well as Captain Desmond?"

"My dear Mary," interrupted Sir Denis, "you are on dangerous ground. Courage is about as evenly distributed among men as the power of reasoning is among women. But there are many kinds of courage. There is physical courage, of which there are various kinds—such as an active spirit of aggression against death, and opposition to danger for the sake of it, a contempt of peril, and a scorn for life itself. That is rare—I believe very rare. Fortunately it is so, for man's passions would render the world too horrible if it were otherwise. If one man determined to kill another, and took no heed to his own life, but parted with it willingly provided his object be gained, he could do what he wanted, and kill his man. No monarch would be safe from the conspirator's knife then. Every man would live at the mercy of his foe. There is again

a physical courage, which is ostentatious—it is derived from what is without rather than what is within a man. The applause and admiration of other men, high animal spirits, the love of praise and desire of honour; these will act so as to produce the greatest displays of heroism in warfare, and in other times of risk; but a man who shall be brilliant in the field, *coram populo*, may fail in the dark, or be deficient in actual moral courage. Then again there is a passive physical courage, which is obstinate and non-aggressive, defensive but unshakable. This is raised to the highest degree of excellence when it is founded on a sense of duty and animated by intelligent devotion, and it may become eventually aggressive and positive. Above all these, perhaps, as a mere development of the power of the intellectual man, is the courage at the base of which is fear—the courage displayed by nervous, timid people, when by sheer force of will, and by the compulsion of their nature, they compel the body and animal instincts to obey the soul. That is a real conquest of matter by mind; but I believe it to be more common than is supposed."

"I cannot fancy," Miss Fraser remarked, without raising her eyes, "how any one can be afraid to die. It must be more painful to live sometimes."

"So," replied Sir Denis, "thought some ancient philosophers, and so think the poor cowards who take their own lives now, Mab."

"But how can it be cowardice to take your own life?" interposed Miss Butler. "How can it be so cowardly to despise it, and throw it away, in one case, when it is such a fine thing to disregard it, as you say, uncle, in another? Mind, I am not saying it is right—I know it is not, and I only ask for Mab, now."

"Bad logic, my dear Mary! The coward flies from that which is the more terrible of two dangers. Running away from an assassin he will leap into a roaring torrent."

"But," said Mary, "if he were really careless of life, he would not run away at all."

"Ah! *there*," laughed Sir Denis, "you have me! I lower my lance, close my book and drop my lecture on courage. And, indeed, I believe I went over all the various sorts of that quality or accident."

"Except Dutch, uncle," said Gerald. "Dutch and French—I don't know the difference."

"It is a courage with its uses. Dutch courage has won a fight or two in its day, and on our side, too, Gerald."

When we went into the drawing-room, Miss Fraser was sitting apart, gazing on the clouds tinted with the last rays of the setting sun as it dropped swiftly behind the distant hills, and Gerald drew a chair to the same window. Mary pointed to a place beside her on the sofa. Sir Denis resumed his study of a pile of newspapers.

"I am so glad, Terence, to have a few quiet moments for a chat with you," began Mary. "Why, we have not met for ages, and as yet we have not had half a dozen words together."

I murmured something, I don't know what—"delightful"—"agreeable"—"old times"—and felt very hot and red in the face.

"And you visited Lough-na-Carra again, with my uncle? Mrs. Considine was so distressed that she was too ill to get up and see you. He," she went on, nodding towards Gerald, "and I went over there to-day, with Rose Prendergast, who took her farewell of the poor invalid. She leaves almost immediately. A Mr. McTurk has bought the place at last, and Rose is coming here to tea, as it will be nearly her last night in Kilmoyle. Poor Rose, so young, so friendless—the great sea and the great world before her!"

"Well, at least she has friends! and when she

crosses the sea she will have her brother to welcome her."

"She is very sad and anxious about him. Although she opens her heart to me she avoids speaking of him, but she has told me he is quite changed, even to her—he is turned mad with politics, and is possessed of a furious hate against England, and all of us, which makes her tremble for his reason. He was getting on famously at the bar in America, she says, and threw all his chances away to begin some agitation, and go making speeches all over the country. It is sad, and all the more because he is so sincere and honest. He has abandoned everything for his principles, and no one can give a better proof of his sincerity. Ah, here she is! Welcome, dear Rose."

Miss Prendergast embraced Mary tenderly, dropped her stiff curtesy to Sir Denis, who, as her name was announced, advanced to the door and led her to a sofa, and she repeated the formal ceremony for Captain Desmond and myself. The greetings between her and Miss Fraser were as cold as those of two girls of such an age well could be. I fancied there was just a shadow of a shade of discontent on Mabel Fraser's brow, as Gerald remained before her chair, and united his efforts with those of Sir Denis

to "make the pretty mute unlock her lips," as he whispered to Mary, "I give it up; you are the only one who knows the 'open sesame.'"

Rose was something more than pretty to-night, she was quite lovely, and the extreme plainness and neatness of her dress became her better than the finest robes. Sir Denis could scarcely conceal his admiration under the courtly politeness which had not deserted him in India, and, as Gerald still lingered near her, the gathering gloom and quick glances of Mabel's eyes revealed her dissatisfaction at the effect produced on the gallant Captain of Bengal Tigers. It would have been difficult to find three such charming faces as might have been seen in the Castle drawing-room that summer evening. But how different was each in character and expression! Rose Prendergast's simplicity and gentleness were accompanied by an air of sadness and resignation. She rarely smiled, but when she did there was a radiance in the smile which startled one in its sudden contrast to the ordinary timid and mournful character of her face. Her manner was somewhat restrained, but at times there came a burst of impulsive warmth through the cover of her reserve, which showed the sun was behind the clouds after all. She was sentimental, tender, meek, and

pure—as guileless as a child, but of a firmness of purpose which could not be overset, and which she, with her brother, inherited from the "Iron de Lacys" on her mother's side. As to Mabel Fraser, who could describe the infinite variety of expression which her features assumed—as the sea changes in colour with the clouds which sweep over it, is ruffled by the breeze, and convulsed in the storm, or sinks to repose. Now and then she could control her face into perfect impassibility, and look out beyond, or through you, as if she were watching some one far away. Every action was graceful and full of some subtle charm, and there was a helpless, dependent, deprecating way about her—as if she were always mutely appealing to those around for protection—as if she wished the world to know she required all its forbearance to forgive her for being alive at all, that was quite touching.

Need I say that, beautiful as they were, neither could be compared with my peerless Mary? Never did a tender, courageous, truthful spirit look forth through a more fitting countenance. She had no artifice—no reserves—no disguises. Her soul was truthfulness, and the utter unfitness of her mind for understanding falsehood—not the mere falsehood of words, but of purpose and character—laid her open

to the stratagems of others, and although her intelligence was quick enough, and her woman's wit was fine and sparkling, she thought and acted with a directness which admitted of no turning or shiftiness, and marched straight towards its object regardless of finesse or manœuvre.

In obedience to a sign from Mabel Fraser, I went over to her window when Miss Prendergast entered. It was nearly dark where she sat, but the servants brought in lights with the tea, and the lamp shone on her as she beckoned me with her jewelled hand—for she loved jewels—to come. She turned her face towards the park and looked out of the window, so that I could not catch her eye, but in a few minutes she had quite exhausted all I knew about Miss Prendergast, and she gave a sigh, as of relief, when I told her Rose was soon going to leave the country for ever. "She is very pretty, but very *gauche*, and, I should think, insipid."

The opportunity that I had been longing for was about to pass away, for Mary called out, "I am sorry to disturb that gloomy little *tête-à-tête* in the window, but tea is ready, Mab. Send over Mr. Brady for your cup, or come over and join us." Mabel was just rising.

"Don't go for one minute," I entreated—"I have a word to say to you—pray, Miss Fraser."

She resumed her seat.

"Since I saw you that night I have not had a moment's peace. Explain what you meant; tell me what we have both to fear. For God's sake, do! Confide in me, and trust me, and all may be well. Is it anything about your father, or about his wife?"

"I don't understand you, Mr. Brady. I have nothing to confide to you—nothing to trust, and I am not aware you and I have any cause of fear in common."

"But you said so. You forget? When I was left alone with you for a few seconds that evening."

"I beg of you, Mr. Brady, to believe that I was so very ill, so excited and frightened by dreadful dreams, I do not know what I said. It makes me shudder to think of it even now——"

"Dreams!—dreams!"

"Yes; all dreams—nothing but dreams. I was worse than Richard the Third. I had a headache, and lay down to try and sleep it off. I must of course have been very much indisposed; but at all events I dreamt my window opened of its own accord, and that a man or a woman—I could not say which—

came in like a cloud and advanced to the bed where I lay. I heard your name mentioned in my sleep, and the figure raised a crucifix and pressed it to my lips and bade me swear that I would never forgive you a mortal wrong you had done me. In my sleep I tried to feign sleep, I thought; but the figure woke me, and with a dagger at my heart made me take a fearful oath. I have endeavoured in vain to recollect it since; but I was some way to be aware you were to die, and I was to keep silence. How can I follow the caprices of a night-mare? Suddenly I found myself on the floor, struggling with the figure, which I thought was taking a box I had been told to guard, and I awoke. But the horrible influence of the dream lasted a long while. I actually don't remember seeing you at all that night. If you think it any use to ask me what I meant—Coming, my dear Mary!—Mr. Brady has been so very interesting!"

I had a dim perception that I was being misled by the fair dreamer, but I could not be sure of it. I did my best to be "interesting" to Miss Fraser and Mary Butler, whilst Sir Denis toiled through his rustling leaves, and broke from covert to covert through Posts and Sentinels, Watchmen, Guardians, and press functionaries of every degree of vigilance,

caution, and discordant views concerning the real well-being of the property they sought to protect. Gerald applied himself with energy to cultivate the good graces of Rose Prendergast. By degrees he got her to speak of the Sacré Cœur at Angers, and listened with an air of much interest to innocent anecdotes about Sister Agnes and Sister Marie, and the novice Charpentier, and Père Auguste and the schools. Sir Denis, who was a strong anti-Romanist —one of his best State papers was on the necessity of the Indian Government keeping up the native shrines and deotas—lifted up his eyebrows now and then to see what Captain Gerald was driving at. Mary was quite enchanted with the effect produced by her friend, and regarded Gerald's attention in the light of a personal compliment. Mabel Fraser was not paying any attention to them at all; she was engaged in looking far away, and her eyes saw nothing near at hand. Miss Prendergast was telling Captain Desmond the miracles wrought by Sœur Ursula, near Angers, which she had seen with her own eyes. The sister for many years had lain in one attitude, and had never eaten or drank except on her saint's day once a year. She was marked with the stigmata, and as you approached her room a smell as of violets, only more odorous and heavenly,

stole forth; and some of Rose's friends had told her they felt their faces touched by angels' wings, and others that they had seen—yes, seen the angels, and heard the music of the golden harps on which they played.

"Oh! think of the bliss of that holy woman, Captain Desmond!" and the young enthusiast's face shone with a beautiful piety and fervour as she spoke; but raising her eyes, and finding herself the centre of the little circle, her voice faltered; she coloured violently, and stopped.

The servant announced that her maid had arrived, and Mary carried off poor Rose, who was blushing like her namesake of the garden, to a private and particular confidence, from which they both returned with red eyes, blowing their noses violently some half hour afterwards.

"It is very well circumstances interfered, Sir Denis, with Captain Desmond's conversion, or you would have had a recantation of his faith this evening," observed Miss Fraser, with more animation than she often displayed. "I was trembling for him all the while he was listening to Miss Prendergast."

"I am indeed flattered by your solicitude, Miss Fraser, but I beg of you to believe that my faith is

firm. I like to hear the merits of all creeds from their professors, but I can still retain my attachment to my own. Don't think, because I stray into a bye-path I intend to abandon the main road for ever."

Rose Prendergast was about leaving when she took a letter from her reticule and handed it to me. "It is from Macarthy, the son of old Dan, who was at Lough-na-Carra as fisherman long ago. He knew I was coming here, and he begged me to bear it to you, Mr. Brady—a petition, he said—and you are not to open it till to-night, and he laid great stress on my not giving it to you till I was leaving." It was a dirty scrawl, closed with a wafer, and directed, "Mr. Terens Brady, doctor of British Fot Redgment in Kilmoyle;" I put it in my pocket without further examination. Rose took her leave, but Sir Denis extracted a promise from her to spend one whole day at the castle ere she quitted Ireland for ever. And at the thought she and Mary had a fresh overflow of tears, and walked sorrowfully down the hall together, locked in each other's arms, and then went up and down the avenue like two disconsolate ghosts till Sir Denis despatched a servant with a ukase on the subject of night air and colds.

"I am beginning to believe in Gerald's ghosts,"

Mary laughed; "for as dear Rose and I were parting——"

"For the fourth time, to my knowledge——"

"No! uncle, the third and last, I assure you—the branches of a tree near me shook violently, and I heard a sigh or a groan distinctly, and thought I saw something."

"We must get Cords to shoot that owl? we shall have no peace in the house till it's done. Heh? what's the matter, Mabel?"

Miss Fraser, with one hand on her heart, sprang up as he was speaking and exclaimed, "Mercy, Sir Denis! Mercy!" then stopped, made a violent effort to control herself, and sinking back into Mary's arms, gasped, "It is that dreadful dream. I beg you to excuse me—I am so weak—so foolish—so—"

"So ill, my dear Mabel, that I am very glad we are all going up to Dublin next week, for you must have the best medical opinion! And you looked so well at dinner. What a pulse, to be sure! We must really have you looked to at once. God bless you, my children. Good night. I shall go down to the Bastille, as Gerald calls it, and have a cheroot before we retire."

Gerald and I repaired to the crypt where Sir Denis condemned us to smoke. A withered native

servant, who acted as under-butler, and who put me in mind of Mohun, my old nurse—but he must be dead long ago—came in with a tray, and inquired as he was leaving, "Do Captain Sahib go out for walk to-night? If master not go, can lock up de dore, and keep dem darn dog quiet."

The cause of Gerald's unamiable mood in the day, may have been a conversation with Sir Denis's local man-of-law, from whom he learned the property was by no means as good as he expected—in fact, the pressure of old debts, of accumulations of interest, mortgages and new liabilities of rates in aid, poor-law rates and local taxation, was crushing. "Sir Denis has received, I've reason to believe, thousands of pounds in gold from India, and instead of laying it out in redeeming some of the heaviest interests contracted by Sir Richard, he keeps it at the Castle till he sees a good property going, he says. He wont trust the banks, he says—for a man of business it's very curious."

So much Gerald, under the influence of a cigar and brandy and water, repeated to me ere Sir Denis came in; but when he made an allusion to the topic, he encountered a stare so open-eyed, fixed, and angry from his uncle, that he dropped it at once. Sir Denis had been at a meeting of magistrates that morning,

and took a very gloomy view of the state of the country. Disaffection was widespread—the very absence of ordinary violence, and the rare instances of crime, showed that the people were bending their minds to a great conspiracy. So reasoned the magistrates, who would have felt safer had an agent been shot at now and then, or had an old "agrarian" of the accustomed type turned up to reassure them. But, as they said, the country is so peaceful, the boys must be bent on some great devilment. Sir Denis was for strong measures, but the difficulty was to know what they were, how and to whom to apply them. He was a just man; but he had little sympathy with those who were now around him. "The most ragged rajpoot (said he) has something of the gentleman in him. The lowest Hindoo has a sort of self-respect. But these people have all the faults, and none of the virtues, of the Hindoo or the Mussulman. Their civility is a cloak to hate, their courage the daring of the assassin." In fact, Sir Denis regarded the law as an instrument of punishment, not as a means of education, and he would have used it in all its rigour as a preventive as well as a cure. His influence strengthened the hands of those who thought that law-making should be left to Parliament, and that the duty of the people was implicit obedi-

ence. On the bench he took the lead; he utterly overthrew and crushed the local attorneys. Mr. Fogarty whispered one day to his rival and friend, Mr. M'Manus, "Bedad, Dan, India must be as great a place for processes and summonses as Kilmoyle itself." He was, however, much as Charles V. among the monks. The ruler of provinces almost as large as the whole of the kingdom of which Kilmoyle was a fragment, was nothing more than an active and rather crotchety magistrate, and member of many boards. He through whose hands had passed revenues of millions, and on whose word depended the destinies of whole races, could do no more than hold his own respecting the levy of rates and the details of the parochial workhouse. There were difficulties he had never dreamt of even in the management of his own estate. Sir Desmond had no idea there could be any obstacle to the enforcement of rights, as long as he fulfilled his duties. And he was engaged in constant conflict and litigation because he and his tenants could not agree in the definition of the words. His nominal rental of 7000*l.* a-year was represented by an actual income of less than 3000*l.*, obtained by the constant exercise of legal duress; and if he inquired into the mode in which an enormous burthen had been suddenly thrown on

an estate already heavily loaded, he discovered that the money which he was obliged to repay had been laid out in making roads which led from nowhere, and ended as they begun, or in works of public utility which had taught the people the arts of pauperism, and had benefited neither individuals nor the state. But he was a strong man, and he set himself to work with that pleasure which such natures experience in any task requiring the highest exercise of their faculties. Only it spoiled his temper somewhat. He was vexed to see that he could not rub out the customs, prejudices, and the national peculiarities of a very ancient and very obstinate people; and was fain to lament at times the unhappy disposition they had to take their own views of matters, and the unfortunate dispensation of geography by which they were placed under Parliamentary Government instead of the energetic system of Indian proconsulates. So he sat talking with Gerald, or rather to Gerald, until it was past eleven o'clock, and then we retired to our rooms.

END OF VOL. II.

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